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The island of Boracay becomes an orgy of sun, sand, and skin. Jerome Gomez reports on the bacchanalia.





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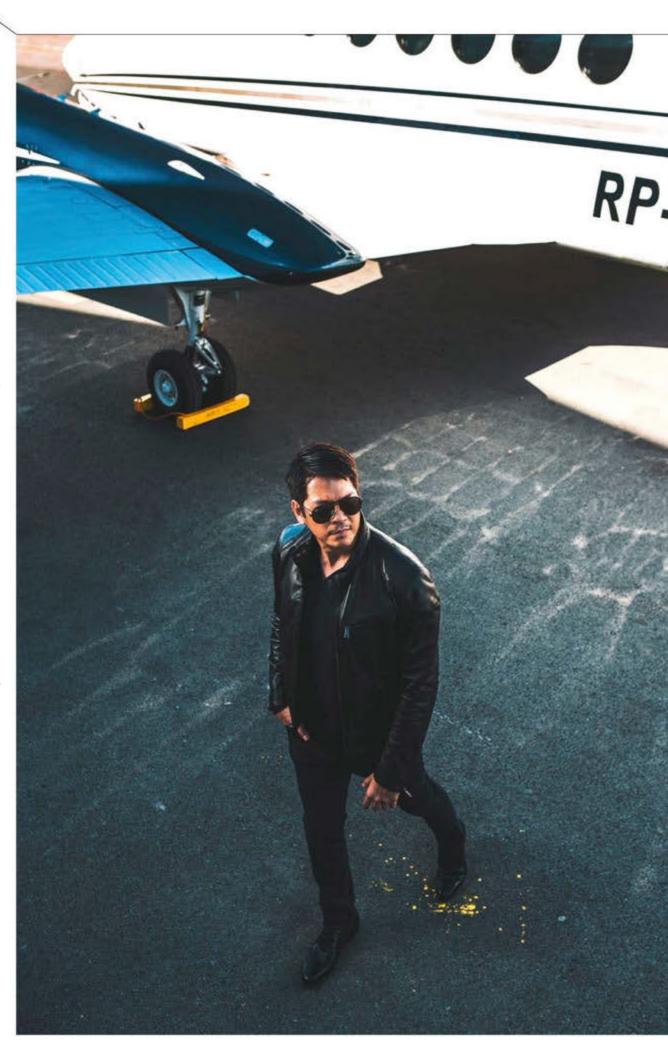
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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Ringo,



It was almost 50 years ago this month, at

around 4 o'clock in the afternoon on July 3, 1966, to be more or less specific, that you visited us here in Manila along with the rest of the Beatles and your entourage. As you've said yourself in interviews over the years, it wasn't a good experience. Before anything else, we here at Esquire would like to apologize for how you and your friends were treated. We're man enough to admit when we're at fault. We own up to our sins and are sorry for what you all had to endure at the hands of our forefathers. The issue that you hold now in your hands is both an act of contrition and an open invitation for you to come back. We hope you give us the chance to make it up to you. After all, much has changed since the last time you

For our cover, we asked one of our coun-

try's most important and celebrated contemporary visual artists, Louie Cordero, to take on the challenge of "reimagining" Peter Blake's work for your album, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, a task that took more than two months to accomplish. We invited several of the most dynamic people who've inspired us and who make the Philippines such an interesting place to appear against a backdrop of our heroes. Among them, there is Ben Chan, whose clothing brand Bench recently launched the #LoveLocal campaign on principles of Filipino pride that are deeply shared by the editors of Esquire; Howie Severino, who came home from the United States during the Marcos era (a period you would know something about) to be a teacher and a journalist and whose work continues to serve as an example; Armi Millare, who has spent the last decade writing and performing with her band Up Dharma Down, who we hope you get a chance to listen to if only to hear how our hearts would sound if put to music; Bea Valdes, who has made us all proud of Filipino design and artistry and is most likely one of the most beautiful women vou'll ever meet; Lucy Torres-Gomez, who is an example of the kind of government official that we wished you had met instead and proves that politics isn't always ugly when it's done out of true commitment to public service; Trickie Lopa, who had a vision with ArtFair Philippines that's allowed us access to the best of local art without having to sell our kidneys to enjoy; Katarina Rodriguez, because we love women and are excited for her imminent ubiquity on magazine covers and billboards everywhere; the

brothers Rox and Romeo Lee, who by their mere presence make everything a lot crazier (and all the better); Olivia Medina, just because every nation needs a bombshell; and Gilda Cordero-Fernando, whose impact on our culture cannot ever be overestimated and who continues to show us we only get better with

Also, in this issue, we're publishing perhaps the most exhaustive article written so far in a local magazine about your last visit, one in which you performed in front of the largest audience (about 80,000 people) you ever did in a single day during your tenure with your former band. Although we know that you'd rather forget a lot of what happened back then, we think that for us to be truly contrite there must be a full accounting of that

So what do you say? Can we start over? Peace and love,

- ERWIN ROMULO

This issue would not have been possible without a little help from our friends: David Guerrero who came up with idea, Lyle Sacris who helped us realize it, Jeremy Guiab who contributed in building it, John Lloyd Cruz who offered spiritual guidance in its making, and Ely Buendia who believed in it and graciously spread the word.

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Susan Calo Medina



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ON OUR COVER:

Photographed exclusively for Esquire by Jason Quibilan.

Cover and set design by Louie Cordero. Featuring Ben Chan, Gilda Cordero-Fernando, Bea Valdes, Lucy Torres-Gomez, Howie Severino, Roxlee, Romeo Lee, Olivia Medina, and Katarina Rodriguez. Styled by Clifford Olanday and MJ Benitez. Art direction by Ces Olondriz and Edric dela Rosa. Special thanks to Jeremy Guiab.

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Erratum: Last month's feature, Through the Grapevine, was shot by Shaira Luna. We apologize for the omission.



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JULY 2015

THOSE WHO HAVE SHOWN DISTINGUISHABLE TALENT

Contributors



LOUIE CORDERO's paintings are informed by the complex political history of the Philippines. Depicting monsters and zombies from Filipino mythology, Cordero includes blood, gore, and military imagery to reflect the eclectic and often violent mix of indigenous culture with American, Spanish, and Asian legacies. His selfpublished underground comic series, Nardong Tae, has a cult following in the Philippines and Japan. For this issue, Louie built the set inspired by the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper album cover for our cover story.

BUTCH DALISAY dropped out of college to work as a journalist after a period of imprisonment during the Martial Law in 1972. After his release, he wrote scripts for Lino Brocka, before graduating cum laude from the University of the Philippines in 1984. He has won 16 Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature in five different genres, and has authored over 20 books.

JASON QUIBILAN is a veteran in the business of making images. After more than a decade of working as a documentary filmmaker, he's taken to photography to explore his "passion for lighting." He is managing director of Shutterspace Studio and is a vocalist in a blues band for which he also plays harmonica. Quibilan is the only still life photographer chosen to be a part of the Asian outpost of the worldwide creative talent management group, Jed Root.

OLIVER X.A. REYES is a writer and a lawyer, and the man behind the always amusing, always informative twitter account @ageofbrillig. This month, Reyes takes us back to 1966, when The Beatles first tried to invade our shores.

JOSEPH PASCUAL realized that the things he loves best are the challenges of natural light, and surprise subjects. Pascual is one of the country's most promising portrait photographers, and has contributed to numerous local publications.





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5 things to consider when TRAVELING FOR BUSINESS

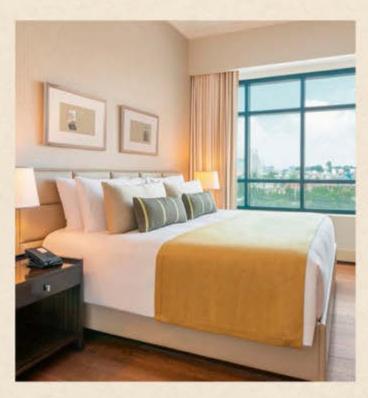
For anyone who has ever traveled before, it is a well-known fact that plans don't always iron out as smoothly as planned. It is a different story for those whose travel intentions are business related – they have become craftsmen in adapting to inconvenient situations, and overcoming them with immediate solutions. This mindset is focused on two things that can never be compromised: time and productivity.

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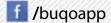


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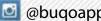












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LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ

ERWIN ROMULO TALKS TO LEYTE REPRESENTATIVE LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ ABOUT LOSING HER HOUSE TO FLOODS, HOW SHE FIGURES THINGS OUT ALONG THE WAY. AND THE THREE THINGS SHE SAID SHE'D NEVER DO.

ESQUIRE: You grew up in Ormoc. What was that like? **LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ:** Very idyllic. **ESQ:** Yeah. I mean that's what people say when it's a province. It's idyllic.

LTG: But it's not the type where I'm forever in a white dress where I milk the cows in the morning, because people have this impression of me growing up in a house on a hill, and there

are cows. A lot of things there are free. It was a handmade life. **ESQ**: What do you mean? **LTG**: Like we didn't have ready-to-wear, all our clothes were made by the *kosturera*. Food

was not fast food. It was always made from scratch. We had the usual candy from the *sari-sari* store, but it wasn't entirely uncommon also for the yayas to make their own candy. It was very simple.

ESQ: You sound almost wistful. **LTG**: I'm thankful for that time in my life when everything was basic and simple. **CONTINUED**



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Special fabric processing absorbs and neutralizes the source of odors, such as perspiration, on the garments. The odor-elimination effect stays active even after repeated washing.

■ TEXTURE

Ultra-fine fibers feel soft and smooth on skin.

ODOR CONTROL

This fabric minimizes odor due to perspiration.



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matic.

CONTINUED

ESQ: Is there a photo, back in Ormoc you still go back to?
LTG: You know, a lot of our photos got lost in the [1991] flood but the albums were some of the things my mom saved. When the water had subsided, that's the first thing she did. She got all the albums and tried to dry them.
ESQ: That must have been trau-

LTG: I wasn't there when it happened. I was in Lupi, Cebu. We were studying in college already, my sister and I, so it was my mom, my dad, and my two younger brothers. So the water came and went away in 15 minutes. Six thousand dead.

ESQ: So like a flash flood? **LTG**: Flash flood. Steady rain for how many days, and then classes were canceled that day, and then they could see the water was rising and everything.

ESQ: Did that teach you anything?

LTG: Yes. It taught me that we can really survive with so little. Because we lost many of our things then, and for many days, my parents were wearing my sister's and my clothes because that was the only bedroom that was saved, and it did not make us less happy. It's really just being together and being alive, no matter what you lost materially. The same thing happened after Haiyan. I went there a day after, two days after, and our house was gone, the roof was gone, all our things wala na, but I had one of the most memorable meals. We didn't have light, just rechargeable lamps, and it was just like candlelight... The family was there, and I was so thankful despite having lost so much and not knowing where to start again.

ESQ: Was Haiyan different? **LTG**: When Haiyan happened, the burden was just so much greater. Because then you had an entire district looking to you for help and on the ground, they don't

differentiate the executives from the legislators. For them, you're connected to government, so you can help.

ESQ: What was the prevailing feeling at the time?

LTG: People were distraught.
But you know what scared me
then was the dead look in [their]
eyes. Zombie-like. Even the
strongest of men, they didn't
know where to start their
businesses. It wasn't just your
home, it was your livelihood.
You lost everything in one go.
And the government was good
at warning us about the storm
surge. But where we're from, we
always get hit by typhoons.

ESQ: Could they have done it any better? Could things have been done better?

LTG: You know, I think the intention to help was there. I don't discount that. It's just—and I say this honestly with no ill will to anyone—maybe the urgency. They did not take that into consideration. It took awhile because they wanted the rehab to be so perfect. As perfect as it was in their minds maybe, and unless they could ensure that, they didn't want to roll out the machinery.

ESQ: What was needed? LTG: Instant relief. So the food was there, maybe, but to get it to the people, there were areas where it took weeks because they were scared of one town having more than the other, but, maybe what they forgot was that in a crisis, you don't find it in yourself to be selfish because it's there. You don't have walls, literally you don't have walls so you see just how much the next household is suffering and I felt then that for help to be felt it had to be en masse. And then the people see they don't have to take more than they need. Then it becomes more manageable. **ESQ**: I think, maybe, the difference between the national gov-

ernment and you is that you're

from there. And you actually believe in the inherent goodness of people. Somebody, maybe from a national perspective, might take a more cynical view.

LTG: Maybe.

ESQ: Do you think you were illprepared to enter Congress? LTG: I wasn't prepared with the legal know-how. Or knowing exactly what to do because I didn't. I didn't know how to lead people. For me, you run a household. But this one, it's so much bigger. More complex and there's a lot of waiting time involved but I felt as long as I was sure I was going to give it my best shot, then maybe that would carry me through the first term. Just being equipped with good intentions and then trusting in something greater

PUBLIC SERVICE IS REALLY ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS AND TALKING TO PEOPLE AND LINKING PEOPLE.

than myself. I always say if God brings me somewhere, then he probably has it figured out already. How I'm going to survive that but it can't be bad that way na ipapasubo ka di ba? In hindsight, I feel it's really about the relationships, you know? Public service is really about relationships and talking to people and linking people.

ESO: Yes.

LTG: So, there's no great science to it. It becomes complex because of all the, the...

ESQ: Politics.

LTG: Yes, the bureaucracy... It's never just black or white. There are many grey areas and it's never as simple as it seems. A yes is not really a yes. There are body signals that actually mean it's a no even when in front of you he or she just has to say yes because that's the politically correct thing to do.

ESQ: Politics gets in the way of public service.

LTG: It does. It really does because there are alliances. You can't take that out. There are alliances on the ground and especially when Haiyan happened. It was a few months after elections. So the wounds of elections were so raw, so fresh, and everything had to be through the LGU. That part I didn't get. Why everything had to be through the LGU. I know the LGU is important but they should have defaulted a bit also so that the help reaches many people more. **ESQ**: When you started in Congress, did you ever get the feeling of being underestimated? LTG: Yes. I like being underestimated. I can use it to my

ESQ: Have you used it to your advantage?

advantage.

LTG: Not deliberately. But I find that it's better when people underestimate you and then they know otherwise after.

ESQ: Yeah, when you surprise them.

LTG: If they underestimate me, I won't go out of my way to change the way they think. But then later they find out that they shouldn't have underestimated me. (Laughs)

ESQ: Are you enjoying life now? I know you're happily married and everything but what are you still looking forward to?

LTG: I'm enjoying life now. I'm living my dream in terms of my family life. I have a wonderful husband, a daughter... I wish I had more kids but maybe it's not part of God's plan for me yet, but there are days as a public servant when it gets really hard, that constant struggle of trying to balance the people here with the people there.

 $\textbf{ESQ} \hbox{: } The \ interests.$

LTG: Yeah, the interests. Because you're interconnected. In the district I'm connected with the mayors, with the governors. It's never just about one faction. It's like having many CONTINUED

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CONTINUED

children, di ba?

ESQ: Are you looking forward to getting out of politics?

LTG: I don't mind the day.

ESQ: That's a good answer.

LTG: If God says enough, my time in politics is over, move on to other things, I'll be OK with that because I know that I'll have a life outside of politics.

ESQ: Margaret Thatcher once said, "If you want something said, ask a man. If you want something done, ask a woman." Do you find that true?

Do you find that true?

LTG: To a certain extent, yeah,
because I think that as women,
innately—and I don't mean this
in disrespect to all the men—innately we're more madetalye.
There are men who are OC also,
but with women we look at micro also. It's not just macro. With
a man, it's just, get this done and
get this done basta the end is
just like this. But when you are a
woman, the journey matters just
as much as the destination.

ESQ: Can you talk a little bit more about the boat project?

LTG: After Haiyan, I was so frustrated because PDAF had just been abolished and it can be used well naman. And my thinking always was na may COA naman. So if may COA, sige let it continue, but whoever has misused it then then ikulong di ba? But those who don't use it then sana tuloy-tuloy because it was really good for the people. But the reality was that it was gone, so I was in a position where I had nothing to give. Nothing. And if I give from our personal [funds], how many people can it reach di ba? **ESQ**: Exactly.

LTG: Iba talaga yung government resources, so I partnered with a private sector and I started out with relief goods and then shelter kits, but then I wanted to marry accountability with help that the people were giving and I wanted them to know the face

of the person whom they were helping. Because if you give food you just say, "Oh, it went to this barangay." But with a boat, it's one on one. So you have a donor, who knows he has helped this fisherman who has a name. That's how it started, and had I known that it would be quite complex I probably wouldn't have started it, but like many things in my life I just said yes without figuring out. I'll figure it out na lang along the way.

ESQ: You've never thought of

seeking higher office from where you are?

LTG: I can't say it will never happen, but I'll never aspire to it. But you know, three things I said I'd never do—enter showbiz, but I ended up marrying Richard. Enter politics, look where I am now.

ESQ: What's the third? **LTG**: The third I said I'd never join a beauty contest. *Buti na lang* it's too late for that! But I love watching [beauty contests]. I love the moment when the

queen is crowned but I see life also in that split second because before she's crowned, that reigning queen is there siya pa 'yong pinagkakaguluhan but in that less than one minute when it's transferred, wala na.

ESQ: Everybody goes to the new one.

LTG: Yeah, and that's so true about politics, that's so true about many things. When that happens, what do you have left? Relationships talaga.





ST.MARC CAFÉ

CHOCOCRO, BREAD, SWEETS & COFFEE

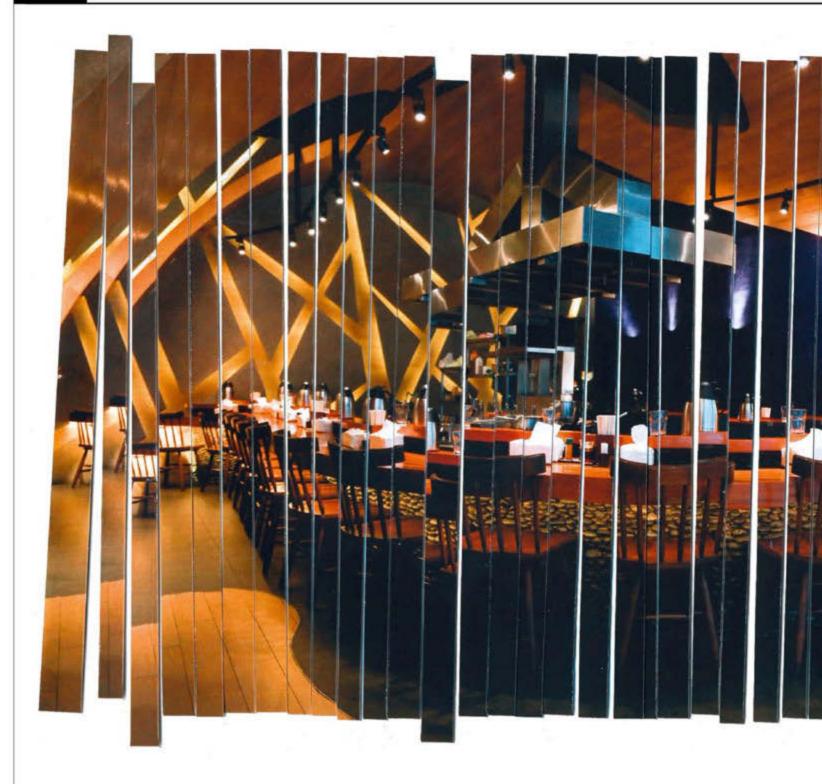
SINCE 1987



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In the middle of May, Elbert Cuenca and his cohorts organized a dinner in Mendokoro Ramenba, their new ramen shop in Makati. The occasion was a one-off dinner cooked by chef Hideaki Aoyama, the surprisingly affable president whose name graces the Menya Aoyama ramen store group that traces

its lineage through Chef Koji Tashiro of the Menya Koji group, directly to the beloved Kazuo Yamagishi (the inventor of tsukemen or dipping ramen, sometimes referred to as the "god of ramen") who passed away in April of this year.

While the dinner was delicious and incred-

ibly varied, I have to admit I was a little confused at first. Cuenca and his crew were very clear that Mendokoro is an attempt at a more purist approach to ramen-making. Japanese food culture encourages specialization. It's quite common to find shops with menus that list less than ten items. In Japan, this starkness is considered a feature, not a fault. It's a choice that conveys confidence and focus: it means the chef and his staff have dedicated themselves to making a small number of dishes really, really well. It's



ous, minimalist menu with a single focus. In Japan, ramen may not be haute cuisine, but when it is eaten, it is treated as the main attraction. Traditionally, ramen is accompanied by nothing else except beer and possibly gyoza.

In contrast, the dinner menu boasted no less than 13 different dishes, beginning with an assortment of single-mouthful starters, a wagyu course, three mini-ramen courses featuring both two different broths, a sorbet, and dessert, paired with French wines; one red and one white.

MENDOKORO IS AN ATTEMPT AT A MORE PURIST APPROACH TO RAMEN-MAKING. JAPANESE FOOD CULTURE ENCOURAGES SPECIALIZATION.

According to Cuenca, the dinner was essentially meant to give Aoyama-sensei an opportunity to flex his creative muscles in an occasion and setting that would be economically unfeasible in Japan. It was a highly unconventional dinner (to say the least) that mingled ingredients like coconut cream, Thai basil, kiwi fruit, camembert, orange peel and foie gras with traditional Japanese ingredients like ayu, karasumi, miso, bonito, tofu, wasabi and mentaiko to make a psychedelic, globe-spanning series of dishes meant to celebrate the onset of summer. Among the highlights was a chawan-mushi or eggcustard flavored with foie gras and orange peel, an impeccably fried katsu that revealed the interior to be wagyu sirloin, and the tonkotsu ramen topped with foie gras. I very clearly remember the cold, curry-flavored ramen served in a bowl made of coconut ice, but I must say that this course in particular was not my cup of coconut milk, particularly as the noodles tended to stick to the ice.

Just the fact that they brewed two kinds of

broth (pork-based tonkotsu and paitan, the chicken equivalent) for this dinner is a kind of show of power. As even one kind of broth requires 12-14 hours of stewing, making two for a one-off dinner where ramen is not the sole focus is a hugely extravagant gesture, which I suppose I find worth stewing about, even a little. Cuenca said the dinner was meant to display Aoyama-sensei's capability at complicated cuisine, which was meant to reflect how excellent he must be at something simple. That this does not actually follow is actually the lesson of Japanese culture, which understands how difficult it is to be simple, or to be good at simple things. In a sparsely furnished room, there is nowhere to hide. Every detail must be perfect.

Cuenca and his friends had of course toured Aoyama-sensei around Manila's Japanese restaurants, including Mecha Uma, whose inventive courses have apparently added a completely new yardstick by which to evaluate Manila's Japanese cuisine. Previously, the sole yardstick by which a Japanese restaurant's excellence used to be authenticity. Mecha Uma's Bruce Ricketts seems to have added new yardsticks—range and originality—which the big boys now feel the need to address, something Cuenca essentially acknowledged when he said Aoyamasensei was inspired by the tour.

Of course, Manila is a different landscape from Japan, so perhaps one might say that it's only natural that different measuring sticks might apply. Still, it's worth observing that while there is no shortage of original cuisine in Japan, the ramen architects there do not feel they have to address the issue. They do not, as it were, feel the shadow of Nobu looming over them. Ramen is their arena, and that is enough for them. Sore wa sore, kore wa kore, they might say. That is that. This is this.

Mendokoro Ramenba is on the ground floor of V Corporate Center on Soliman Street, Salcedo Village, Makati.

an approach that Filipinos associate more perhaps with sports and concert pianists than with food and cooking, but which the Japanese (who consider fanaticism as an acceptable and even admirable approach to any field of endeavor) take in stride.

So it's in the spirit of this very Japanese idea that Mendokoro is boasts a menu of seven noodle items: four kinds of hot ramen, one cold ramen, two tsukemen, or dipping ramen, all made on top of a base of rich tonkotsu—pork-bone—broth. It is a rigor-

A BEAUTIFUL MESS

THE CONUNDRUM OF THE PHILIPPINES.

BY ANGELICA GUTIERREZ

To live in the Philippines is to tread the fine line of loving it in spite of its flaws without becoming apathetic to its problems. At the same time there is so much to celebrate about the motherland-its natural beauty, the diversity of cultures, the warmth of its people. Love it or hate it, it's our home.

"I knew my affection for the Philippines was equally as telling: a democracy on paper, apparently well ordered, regularly subverted by irrational chaos. A place where I'd felt instantly at home."

ALEX GARLAND, The Beach

"To most Westerners, the Philippines suffers from a lack of exoticism. Simply put, Philippine culture is just too accessible. To a young Western backpacker, sharing a bus ride with a saffron-robed Buddhist monk reading the sacred Pali texts is exotic. Sitting next to a Catholic nun reading the Bible is a lot less so. When the Buddhist monk takes out his prayer beads, closes his eyes, and chants under his breath, the Westerner swoons. When the Catholic nun pulls out her rosary and says her Hail Marys, the backpacker squirms."

STEVEN MARTIN

Opium Fiend: A 21st Century Slave to a 19th Century Addiction

"It is ironic that many Filipinos learn to love the Philippines while abroad, not at home."

AMBETH R. OCAMPO

Rizal without the Overcoat

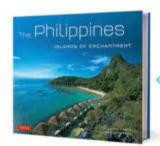
"We have been under tutelage for four hundred years; almost from the beginning of our recorded history. Now we are free. We have been free for sometime. And we have come to realize that to be free is more than merely to be rid of external constraint. It is, above all, to be self-possessed, as a person is selfpossessed. And that is what we are up to. We are trying to acquire a personality. We are trying to possess ourselves."

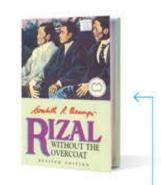
HORACIO DE LA COSTA, S.J.

Selected Essays on the Filipino and His Problems To-day









BARBARA: Make us kuwento naman, Father Jean... What was it like seeing us for the first time? MALLAT: Like falling in love, Barbara. Love, yes. That's exactly it. The Philippines was totally unexpected. God's surprise, if you will. The Spaniards never fully appreciated this melancholy paradise, but I did. Such mystifying, hallucinogenic beauty. Flowers the color of blood and the size of fists... Who needs foie gras when you've got mangoes and bananas?

JESSICA HAGEDORN

Dogeaters, Act I, Scene 2, p. 19

"Much as the Philippines may, from time to time, make the global headlines as a troubled arena—the scene of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and armed rebellions or kidnappings that regularly make the front pages—a visit to the archipelago that serves as the Pacific gateway to Asia is rewarded with more than a glimpse into an often befuddling, invariably fascinating culture, one full of joy, humor, courage and song in the face of all apparent adversity."

ALFRED A. YUSON

The Philippines: Islands of **Enchantment**

"The North Americans, like the Spaniards and all other European powers. covet this most beautiful pearl of the Orient Seas. But we prize it more ourselves, not only because God has given it to us as a present, but also because we have already shed so much blood for it."

APOLINARIO MABINI

The Letters of Apolinario Mabini, p. 42









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FAST FORWARD

YOU'VE BEEN AROUND AND YOU'VE HAD YOUR FUN, BUT NOW YOU JUST WANT A CAR YOU CAN HAVE A LASTING RELATIONSHIP WITH— AND THE NEW SUBARU LEGACY GETS IT.

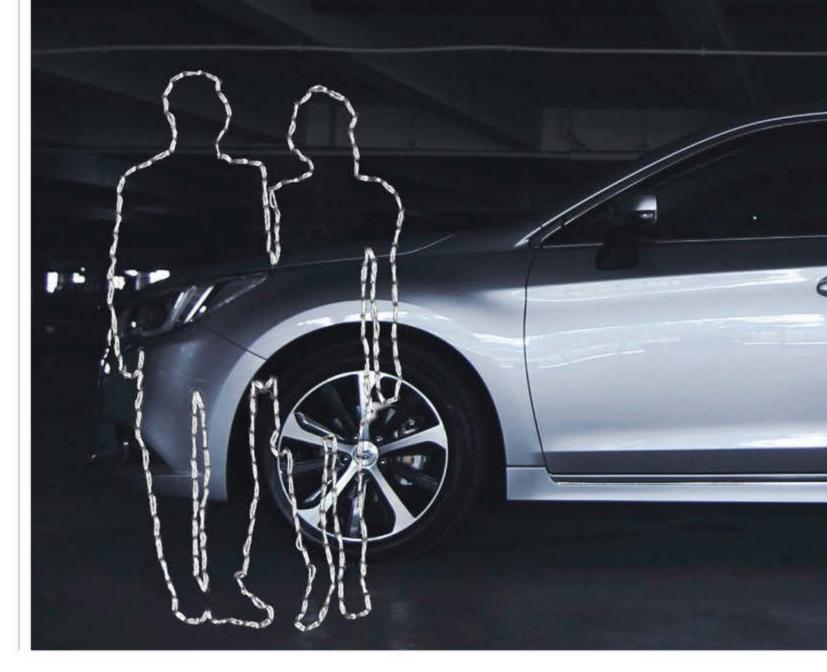
BY KARA ORTIGA, PHOTOGRAPH BY BOBBY MADDATU

I feel sophisticated inside the leatherencased interiors of the steel silver 2015 Subaru Legacy. I feel like a pilot inside her cockpit. This all-new version has better technology, and its re-design is swankier, too. It's the kind of car you want to have when you're in your early 30s, and "stability in life" sounds exceedingly charming rather than fogeyish. It's similar to the point in life when you start buying art as investment, and choosing whiskey becomes easier.

Driving the Legacy feels like a good drag of your morning cigarette. It's smooth and satisfying. The patented Subaru Boxer engine sits deeper in the car, resulting in a lower center of gravity, making the car feel more grounded, like you're coasting effortlessly along the road. Seated behind the wheel, in your 10-way adjustable driver's seat, you feel sure-footed and unwavering.

Its traction-enhanced, all-wheel drive ensures that driving through the rough conditions of a congested city is a breeze, and you're not so worried about getting through temperamental and torrential Philippine weather anymore. You get an exceptional grip, balance and control of the car, as if it is helping you respond to road conditions with the reflexes of an F1 driver (or so you believe, inside your head).

This is a car that is determinedly straightforward: well-built, comfortable, and decent looking to say the least—like a quiet confidence that gets the job done without being overbearing or flashy. You don't mind getting



comfy in the soft leather-trimmed upholstery that makes you settle in with delight. Everything in the interior looks rich and

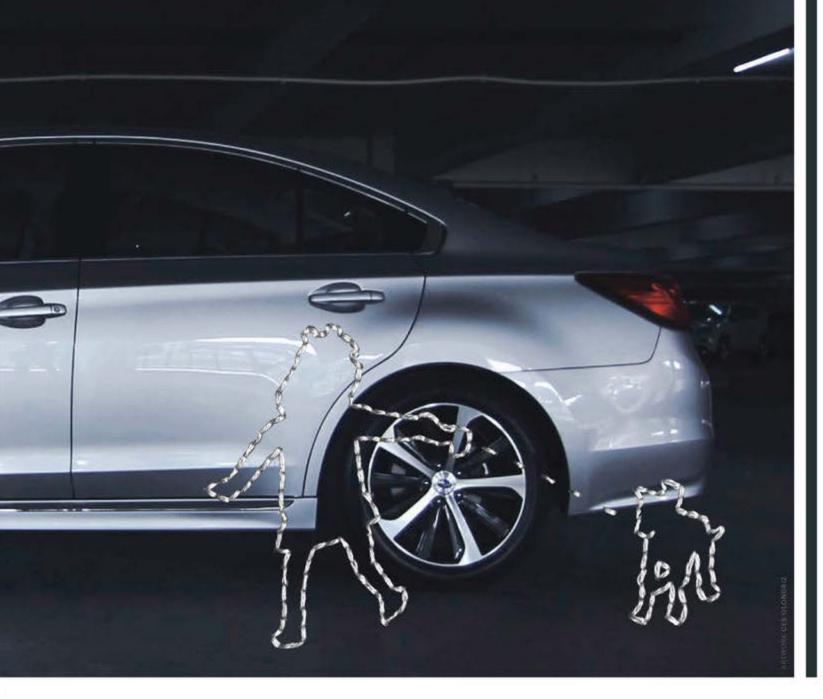
While a certain number of this city's population have their drivers on speed dial, you're one who prefers to steer your own ship. You'd rather watch your girlfriend's long legs sprawl out comfortably in the passenger's seat from your periphery, thankful for the car's generous roominess. And when you're driving home past midnight on a quiet highway, you like to let the sliding moon roof open, and allow the night sky to do its magic while you're cruising, blasting your go-to playlist on the Subaru

Starlink—a 7-inch touch screen entertainment system with Bluetooth capabilities, so that you can play all the '80s and '90s tunes you know by heart.

You've sown your wild oats on the asphalt and now you want a car you can imagine a family with, even when you are still clearly at the peak of your bachelorhood. You want a long-term relationship with a car that understands you and what you need during this transitional period between your fast and loose 20s and your family forward 40s. You still want to be rock n' roll, but sans the morning hangovers. You want to drive the kind of car that you can park in a discreet corner of a parking lot with the engine on

that won't attract unwanted attention, but still conveys the maturity that you try to exude in the workplace.

Getting older understandably sizzles out a lot of steam from the energy of your youth. It's only inevitable that now you want something simpler, more stable, and self-assured—something you can imagine yourself with for the long run. You want a confident ride that still has a debonair edge. You want a charmer, but a dependable one. And what the Legacy leaves its driver with is exactly that: a slightly cheeky but genteel impression that while limitless energy may be wasted on the youth, you're still glad that you're not that young anymore.







SELFIES GET SERIOUS

NEVER HEARD OF HUAWEI BEFORE?
THEIR P8 SMARTPHONE WILL SOLVE THAT.
RY LONTY CRUZ

"Nobody knew Huawei," said Richard Yu, the company's CEO of Business Consumers. It wasn't false humility or an appeal to the heart. Huawei, up until 2012, was a tech company that provided for other tech companies. To call them "unsung heroes" back then would be giving more credit than they received. A quick Google search will show Huawei's fingerprints in most of the biggest household electronic brands, but when it comes to actual branding and credit, those were often left out. Since starting in 1988 and after decades of behind-the-scenes success, Huawei was tired of being the Jan Brady of tech.

The last few years have given Huawei the boost and spotlight they've sought for nearly 30 years. Their P smartphone series catapulted Huawei to becoming one of the top three smartphone brands in the world. As Apple and Samsung continue their legal tug of war, Huawei is ready to take the helm when the veritable rope snaps. And with their latest smartphone, the **P8**, Huawei is hitting Apple, Samsung, and the rest of their competitors where it hurts: selfies.

There was no shortage of hype when Huawei had their South East Asia P8 launch in Singapore. From sand artists to river cruises, the company gave the smartphone all the attention it deserved. But the brightest spotlight was shone on the P8's camera capabilities. Boasting superb optical imaging stabilization (the best in its class) and DSLR-level independent image processing, the P8's camera proves that Huawei is not content with just surpassing smartphone benchmarks. It

doesn't matter if you're shooting sweaty selfies on top of mountains at high noon or drunken groufies (a Huawei innovation by the way), the P8's enhanced high-contrast and low light functions won't leave anything to the imagination, thanks to their 4-color 13mp RGB imaging, which is a first in the industry.

But it takes more than just megapixels to get that perfect Leibovitz-esque portrait. The P8 has A Perfect Selfie function that will make you look thinner, brighter, and sure, even whiter if you really feel the need to scratch that itch. And once you've nailed that definitive selfie, the P8 even has a Light Painting app that can turn anyone into a professional art photographer. It's the first camera ever to provide real-time preview when capturing light.

Huawei admits that they came in late to the smartphone industry but as Richard Yu said, in just a couple of years they are now one of the top brands, just behind Apple and Samsung. That's concrete proof that their smartphones are getting better and better, with more people switching to their phones and sticking with them. "Every year we invest [hugely] in our Research and Development. We have a lot of resources and we are very strong and powerful when it comes to our innovation technology. I think that's why we've jumped ahead into the top three." Despite being in the market just less than a decade, Yu believes that with more progress and dedication, Huawei could very well be synonymous to smartphones, or at the very least, selfies, 14

FORMAL RIGOR

ONE OF THE GREAT ITALIAN DESIGNERS OF THE 20TH CENTURY GAVE IMPORTANCE TO THE PRACTICALITY OF PRODUCTION.

The architect and designer Marco Zanuso was one of the first creative figures in Italy to take an interest in the problems of product industrialization. Wanting to go beyond aesthetic issues to incorporate technological, industrial, distribution, and communication variables, Zanuso aimed "to give form to what I call complexity." And this meant working closely with the production process, which he carried out through practical dialogue with companies and the application of new materials and technologies (furniture with foam-rubber upholstery for Arflex, the miniaturization of telephone and television components for Brionvega). Take, for example, his research into support structures of chairs or where to anchor a seat's load-bearing element. His study, which dates back to a project presented at the MoMA in New York in 1949, ultimately resulted in a wooden armchair developed from a circular matrix. The Woodline, with its curved wooden frame, bears exemplary formal precision. Considered as one of Zanuso's most iconic works, it has also shaped the history of Italian design, proving that the strictness of practicality can give birth to timeless beauty.

Cassina at Furnitalia, 30th Street, Bonifacio Global City.



STYLEAGENDA



THE FULL EXPERIENCE

This summer, global technology innovator **LG Electronics** brings to the Philippines the most massive television to date—the 105-inch CURVED Super ULTRA HD TV. The 105UC9 boasts of a resolution of over 11 million pixels—five times more than a Full HD TV—and CinemaScope 21:9 aspect ratio. These elements deliver a truly unique viewing experience with ultrasharp, lifelike images all over the 105-inch screen. LG's ULTRA Surround concept and a 7.2-channel, 150W sound system deliver a powerful, rich audio experience. The curvature of the display, coupled with the LG 5K 3D+ feature and other LG 3D technologies, has been calibrated for maximum immersiveness. The 105UC9 also promises an intuitive user interface with LG Smart+ TV.

To learn more about the one-of-a-kind LG 105-inch CURVED Super ULTRA HD TVs, visit www.lg.com/ph, like LG's official Facebook page, LG Philippines, or follow @LGPhilippines on Twitter and Instagram.

KEEPING IT SIMPLE

Nougat, coffee, charcoal grey, forest green, midnight blue, and brick red—these plain, neutral, and subtle colors make the newest chairs designed by Calligaris Studio. But with an iconic chevron-patterned tweed fabric, Colette takes the ordinary to the next level by giving off a strong masculine edge. Its generous seat and curved backrest, both padded to offer optimum comfort, also make it stand out from the rest. The smart and contemporary Colette chair also exudes different personalities and can easily be

integrated in any home with its six contrasting colors. Express yourself and relax in simple elegance. Take a look at the Colette chair available in Furnitalia at 30th Street corner Rizal Drive, Cresecent Park, West Bonifacio Global City.



LUXURY IN MOTION

Work hard, play hard, and never look back—such is the winning formula of **WOLF**, a label of luxury watch winders. For starters, the 4.1 Modular Winder provides an option for automatic watch owners to expand their collections. This glass and steel winder made of the same materials as high performance automobiles and aircrafts is perfect to protect a collection of timepieces, keeping them wound with its single power source. WOLF also goes beyond function with their upscale option: Roadster. Inspired by the performance and sophisticated interiors of luxury European sports cars, the Roadster's construction is packed with features designed to protect your prized watches while keeping them wound.



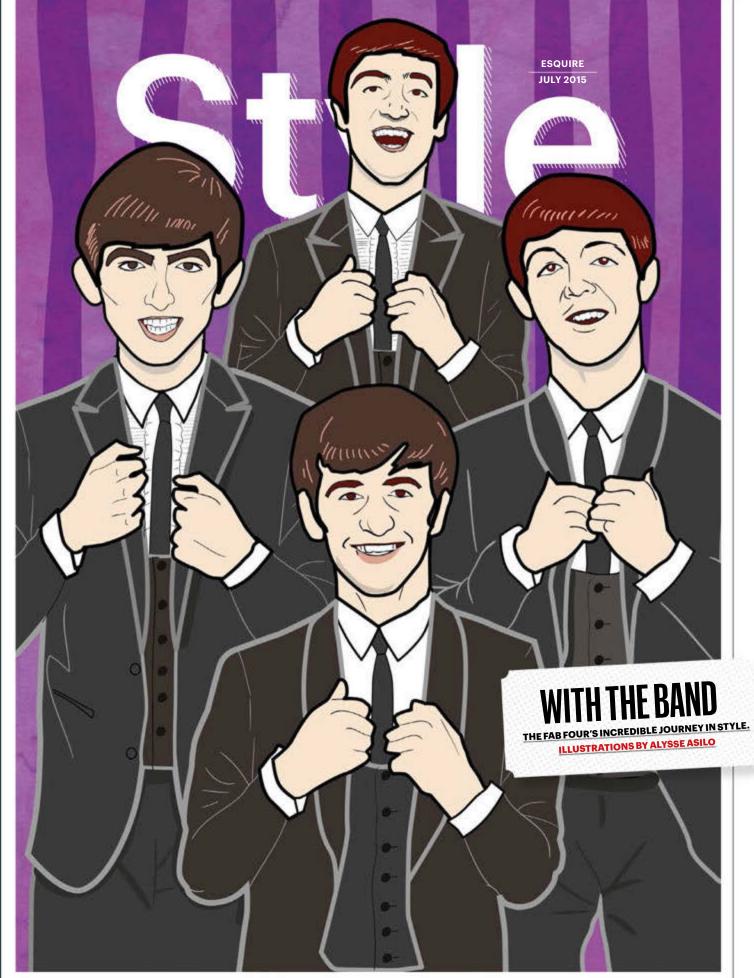
URBAN VILLAGE

Eastwood City, a stateof-the-art residential, commercial, business, and entertainment complex, and the country's first cyberpark and integrated urban township, offers families, professionals, and urbanites the finest choices in shopping, dining, and recreation. In fact, it recently bagged



the "Highly Commended Mixed-Use Development" Award at the 2015 Asia Pacific Property Awards in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The 18-hectare township developed by property giant Megaworld was recognized for its contribution to the growth of the business process outsourcing industry in the country and for successfully integrating the LIVE-WORK-PLAY concept to its community.

Experience an urban lifestyle and visit Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City.



Please Please Me

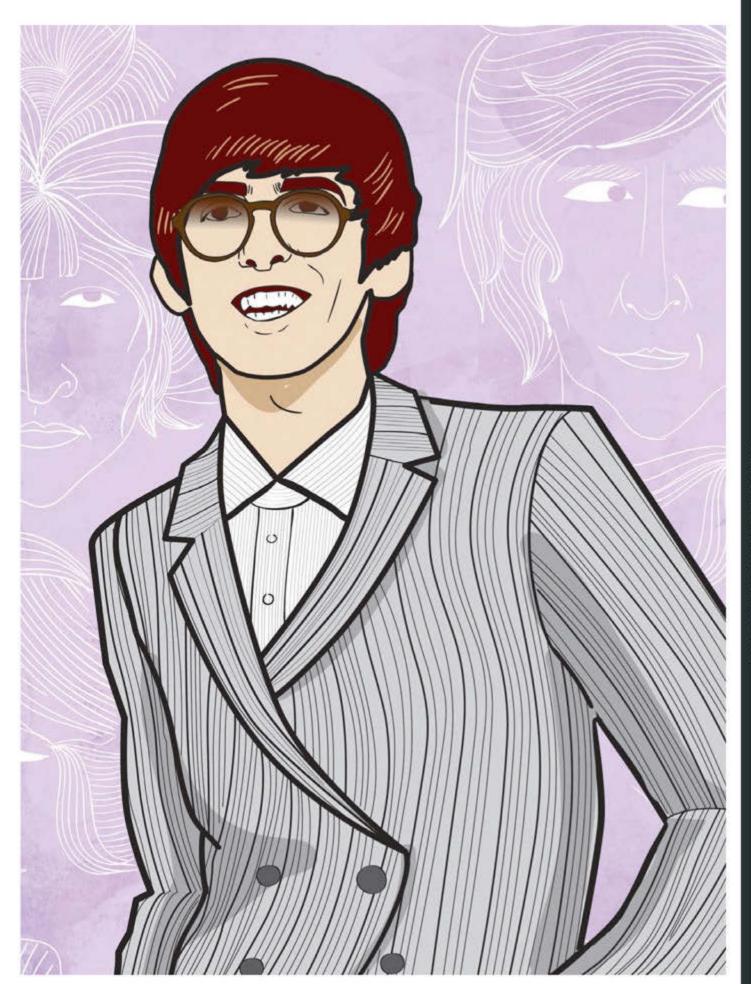
Style is as essential as the sound that defined The Beatles. Together with their manager Brian Epstein, (clockwise from left) George Harrison, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and Ringo Starr cultivated a very distinct look. They were known to visit the same

shop and buy the same clothes in different variations so that, as Ringo revealed, they'd end up with "little uniforms for ourselves." Early in their career, for the cover of their first album, Please Please Me (1963), that uniform was a mohair suit, drainpipe-style trousers, a variation of the Chelsea boot, and that mop-top hair. By always dressing similarly, in their immaculate but slightly odd fashion, the British quartet cut a striking presence, captivating Liverpool and beyond. They would go on to influence the way men dress for decades to come. Suits, shirts, and ties by Dolce & Gabbana.

Style



The cape-like jacket that Ringo Starr wore on the cover of Help! (1965) was part of a wonky attempt in maritime flag signaling. The plan was to spell out H-E-L-P, but the guys ended up with N-U-J-V. Regardless of the gibberish, the garment fetched a cool £61,000 when it was put up for auction last year, proving that Beatlemania lives on. On Ringo Starr: Trench coat and bucket hat by Burberry and turtleneck sweater by Prada.



Revolver Eventually, the fab foursome started to move away from their tailored uniform, favoring interesting and diverse clothing styles from London's new mod boutiques. As seen in George Harrison during their Revolver (1966) days, the band continued to wear suits, but gone are the days of matching minimalism. They started experimenting with colors and patterns, with a nod to Edwardian sensibilities. The Beatles also popularized the wearing of sunglasses anytime and anywhere. On George Harrison: Suit, shirt, and sunglasses by Ermenegildo Zegna.

Style



Ssi. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

As their music evolved, so did their style. It was all about tripping on your personal groove by the time Sgt. Pep-

per's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967) was released. The band embraced bright, rainbow-colored, and psychedelic clothes, which were perfectly in sync with their current sound. On the cover of Sgt. Pepper, Paul McCartney wore a dyed satin military suit in fluo-blue from Bermans, a theatrical costume house. The iconic look would be imitated by other music acts through the ages. Paul McCartney: Jacket by Saint Laurent.



The Bestles

By the time of *The Beatles* (1968) or the *White Album*, as it is more popularly known, the flailing foursome preferred more understated clothing. The individualistic tastes of each Beatles were becoming more apparent, as if these disparate styles reflected each member's state of mind. Most notably, John

Lennon grew out his hair and beard, while Paul McCartney maintained a clean-shaven look. It was the beginning of the end. M. On John Lennon: Coat and shirt by Raf Simons.

SEVEN SECONDS

If you were to wear a watch, it would only be a limitededition timepiece (20 pieces only) with a carbon-coated titanium case and a plaid cutout skeleton dial. Burberry, Greenbelt 4.

HEAVY METAL

You know that the studded black belt looped into jeans or trousers is a standard. You also know not to wear it with leather. Givenchy, Greenbelt 4.



TOP OF THE POPS

You are on top of the world, so declare it with a song, whether it is the narrow victory of Springsteen's "Thunder Road" or the total domination of Queen's "We are the Champions." Or just say it with a designer medallion pinned to your shirt. Gucci, Greenbelt 4.

BOOGIE ON DOWN

Though fortune leads you to finer things, you steer clear of rigid formality. The classic suede brogue gets a dose of subversive style with silver micro-stud embroidery. Giuseppi Zanotti Design, Shangri-la Plaza.

The world of wheels has always inspired what men wore. Think of the Schott Perfecto jacket, SPEEDWAY STYLE the Tod's driving loafer, or that pair of blue-lensed Persol sunglasses famously worn by Steve McQueen. For the 50th anniversary of Mustang, Ford collaborates with fashion innovators, Anna Sui, Rogan, Paula Cademartori, CO|TE, and Pamela Love, to create a limited-edition line of graphic T-shirts. These five designers each created three designs embodying the Mustang spirit. Detroit-native Anna Sui and Mustang have quite a bit in common. Sui's designs illustrate a rock 'n' roll fantasy, reflecting the freedom embodied in the classic car. Rogan Gregory and Scott Mackinlay-Hahn of Rogan expresses raw American heritage through the simplicity of natural, hand-drawn lines. For Tomaso Anfossi and Francesco Ferrari of CO|TE, inspiration comes from thinking without preconceptions, while paying attention to quality and tradition. Their designs showcase Mustang's attention to detail and geometric elements. Paula Cademartori's passion for fine details are distinct in her collection of bags. Her designs highlight geometric shapes, too, plus the fantasy of color. Finally, Pamela Love takes off from the car's role in American pop culture and the idea of moving forward. Love's designs highlight the iconic horse as a symbol of power, strength, and freedom. Wear these with a leather jacket or a pair of worn jeans (in your very own red Mustang, of course). 🗵



IF THE SHOE FITS

YOUR LIKING ARE WORTH THE WAIT.

BY CLIFFORD OLANDAY



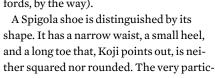
(3)



Japanese bespoke shoemaker [1] Koji Suzuki has always been serious about shoes. At a young age, with the influence of his father who was patternmaker of ladies shoes, he set off to Sarteco, the fashion school in Tuscany, to learn more about the trade. It was during that time, while attending a friend's birthday party, that he met the famed Florentine shoemaker, Roberto Ugolini. A young Koji did not pass up the chance to ask the master artisan, whom he remembers as a "very cool" and "good looking guy," to teach him how to make shoes. Roberto took Koji under his wing and taught him the most valuable lesson: how to make "everything by hand."

Now, under his brand Spigola, Koji is known the world over, from Hong Kong to the US, for his made-to-measure and bespoke footwear. Nighttime is when he sketches his designs

> and when the sun rises, he proceeds to create what he dreamed up just hours before. When asked about his inspirations, Koji mentions old movies and vintage shoes. He may not say what films in particular or remember which shops in Japan and Europe he saw his inspiration, but it is nonetheless integrated in his creative process. First, he thinks about the suit on the silver screen, then he thinks about the shoes to go with that suit-how can he translate that suit's style into a shoe? In this way, clothes such as the inky navy suit he wore on his trip to Manila become the inspiration for his creations (he paired his suit with a black oxfords, by the way).



ular dimensions give the shoe a chiseled appearance, which flatters the wearer by elongating his line. [2] The styles are always classic (oxfords, loafers, chukkas—when asked about new trends, he responds with a laugh), but they do allow for a bit of deviation. The best example is the [3] Spigola double monk strap shoe. Instead of lining up the twin straps in a perfect parallel, the bands are placed ever slightly apart—a small difference that makes his DBs more unique.

Through trunk shows, which out here are arranged by the mens' specialty store Signet, his creations are made available to local shoe enthusiasts. The by-appointment process is straightforward. Made-tomeasure clients try on up to [4] five trial shoes to determine the best fit, while bespoke clients undergo a thorough measurement session, the result of which will eventually become a mold. Styles are discussed. [5] Materials, from cordovan to lizard to crocodile, are pored over. Koji, the master shoemaker, is there to guide and recommend. In a couple months, the handmade shoes are done. Bespoke creations take longer to finish, but the incomparable comfort plus the fact that you have shoes created to your liking makes a Koji Suzuki pair worth the wait. M







Koji Suzuki returns to Manila this month. Signet, 163 Legazpi Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City.



Prathan Peter Poopat picks a perfect pair of white sneakers from a pristine white shoe box. (Go ahead: say it five times fast.) Their rubber soles not yet having known ground, their supple calfskin leather unbesmirched by scuff or scrape, the only branding a discreet series of gold numbers written on the heel, the sneakers are so white they seemed cut out of space, like an ex-girlfriend from vacation photographs. "These are our Achilles 1528," says Poopat, a co-founder of Common Projects, the New York-based company that, when introducing the first-gen white Achilles about 10 years ago, had the audacity to charge more than \$200 for a pair of sneakers not because they promised to increase a vertical leap or cushion a foot but because they were made with care.

A new pair of Achilles now runs about twice that, as white sneak-

ers are caught up in the slipstream of high-end men's wear and ascending higher and higher in terms of price and quality. Louis Vuitton's Kim Jones created some \$895 white sneakers for the house's current spring collection; the blokes from Rag & Bone spun out variations to the tune of three bills; Tomas Maier, the austere German who heads Bottega Veneta and his own eponymous label, introduced a \$490 white suede-and-leather sneaker in his prefall collection, calling it "the modern brogue"; and then, of course, Italian bottier Berluti delivered Playfield, a \$1,290 calfskin-suede low-top sneaker, which represented one small step for well-heeled Berluti clients but blew the minds of everyone else when it debuted a few months back. (Alessandro Sartori, Berluti's artistic director, spent his adolescence wearing custom suits by Vitale Barberis Canonico and crisp white sneakers

from Adidas. So it was only a matter of time before he brought his bosses into the sneaker game.) These new iterations, all pristine materials and oldfashioned craft meeting in an informal yet extremely well realized shoe, are no longer intended solely for weekends and workouts, like so many Purcells and Chucks and Vans before them. At these prices and at this level of quality and design, the new generation of white luxury sneakers belongs out in the wide-open world.

A crisp white sneaker ennobles any clothingjeans and chinos, of course, but also well-chosen separates or a sharply cut suit. "Pairing a sneaker with a suit takes some of the formality out of the ensemble," says Liad Krispin, senior director of trend and influencer marketing for Adidas. "It shows the guy doesn't take himself too seriously," agrees Sartori. Or, conversely, it can also be read as a power play, the mark of a man who is clear about just how serious he is. "A suit with sneakers shows," says Poopat of Common Projects, "that you are powerful enough that you don't have to impress anyone." A good pair of white kicks proves that there's enough slack in the rope tying you to your role in society-you can be both you and it, professional and a person.

"A SUIT WITH SNEAKERS SHOWS YOU ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO IMPRESS ANYONE."

They also carry the myths of men who once wore them. Like so much of what we wear today on the street or on the runway, on our feet or on a Sunday, the inherent cool and fashionability of the white sneaker began with a man named Steve McQueen. The year was 1963. McQueen, a sort-of star after The Magnificent Seven but not yet afire, had just moved to Palm Springs, California, with his wife, a Broadway dancer named Neile. That spring, Mc-Queen had agreed to let a photographer named John Dominis hang around for a while. One afternoon, as McQueen waited for his wife to get ready for one of their habitual treks into the desert-he was teaching her how to handle a revolver, a very McQueen thing to do-Dominis captured a picture of him aiming a pistol at an unseen fireplace as he sat on a couch, his foot resting on a marble coffee table. On his torso was a short-sleeved buttonfront shirt; on his legs, a tight-fitting pair of chinos. And on his feet, a perfect pair of white canvas Keds. "That's all we wore back then," the former Mrs. McQueen—now a cabaret performer living in Century City-recalls. "Those were our desert shoes, our everyday shoes." When that photo appeared, it

not only served to enshrine McQueen as a squinty antihero of great charm but also elevated his sneakers from the schoolyard into grown-ass man shoes.

By 1962, sneakers were giving so-called leather shoes-the loafers, brogues, and oxfords-so much of a run for their money in market share that a New Yorker piece about the changes in footwear, "Revolution," declared, "The leader of the revolution is the once lowly sneaker, sales of which have more than doubled in the past six years—a period in which conventional leather shoes have lost just under 10 percent of the total shoe market." This accelerated further with 1973's introduction of Adidas's Stan Smith, the by-now-iconic white leather low-top. Smith was a young tennis player at the top of his game, and his namesake sneakers quickly became on- and off-the-court staples. (Just how wellknown the Stan Smiths remain was news to Stan Smith, who now lives in South Carolina and laughed about a talk with his daughter. "She said to me, 'Dad, you're famous! Jay Z said your name in a song!'")

So why the rush toward white sneakers now? Ryan Babenzien of Greats, a company that started selling handmade-in-Italy sneakers directly to consumers two years ago, sees it as the antistrophe of the formalized footwear of recent modern dandy-

> ism. "We've been living in a world dominated by wing tips and dub monks. But footwear is cycling down." For those who once clung to a strict hierarchy of footwear-polished lace-ups at the top, loafers and the like in the middle, lowly sneakers, street cleaners, at the bottom-there is now a sense that the world is flat. A well-made sneaker, even one-especially one-in summerfriendly, casual-leaning white, is be-

coming no less or more viable an option than a wellmade loafer. Jack, Stan, and Chuck have grown up and now want not for versatility and respectability. (Think what you will of the man as an artist, but there's a Jeff Koons element to all this. Koons's entire career has been built on instilling immense value in seemingly everyday objects. Take a look at his recent "Popeye" series, in which he-or, more accurately, his army of assistants-painstakingly crafted aluminum pool toys that differ from the Walmart variety only by a few hundred more zeros at the end. There is something of that, too, in the \$400 white sneaker-an acknowledgment that it is man's lot to find value in even the most fleeting disposable forms.)

There would be no Vuitton white sneaker without the Common Projects white sneaker, and no Common Projects white sneaker without Stan Smith's white sneaker, and on and on. So the sneaker-led revolution that supposedly began 50 years ago came and went, and everybody won without a shot being fired. There were no flags of surrender waved. Just white sneakers raised high in the air on both sides of the field. 14

ASK NICK

ESQUIRE US' FASHION DIRECTOR WILL NOW TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS.

Fig. 1



Jacket and T-shirt worn together: How?

@HELSILAS

It's all in the jacket. Since the T-shirt is the most casual item you can wear, the jacket must also be casual in order to work. The easiest approach is to go for an unlined cotton jacket [Fig. 1, by Hickey Freeman], specifically one with some sort of texture (physical or visual), as this type works better than flatter, more refined cloths. As for the T-shirt, a crew neck is always best, but make sure it's lightly fitted in the waist so that it doesn't hang, sag, or add extra pounds.

What color belt should I wear with my grey suede chukkas?

ADDRESS WITHHELD

► At Esquire, we try not to get bogged down with shoe and belt matching, as it can easily look like you're trying too hard—and that's as bad as not trying at all. But light-colored shoes and summer clothes present a problem, since dark belts can appear to cut you in half when set against lighter cloths. Generally, it helps if your belt is a light shade of brown or taupe. It also helps if it has the same casual feel materialwise as your shoes, so you might want to look for a canvas or even a suede belt.

GOT A QUESTION FOR NICK SULLIVAN? E-MAIL HIM AT ESQSTYLE@HEARST.COM, OR TWEET HIM AT

Style



THE MECHANICAL TIMEPIECE OF THE FUTURE IS HERE. BY NICOLE LIMOS

Think of the Bulgari Diagono Magnesium as a vault you can carry on your wrist. Embedded with a cryptographic chip and an NFC (Near Field Communication) antenna, it can unlock and transmit digital

certificates to the Bulgari Vault application on your smartphone and to an immensely secure and hidden Swiss military facility somewhere in the Alps. All the personal data and encrypted information you choose to store—IDs, high-resolution copies of passports, methods of payment, even passwords—are protected as much as, say, your Swiss bank account, requiring double authentication. Soon enough, this timepiece will enable you to unlock the doors of your house or car, activate your alarm systems, pay for goods throughout contactless payment systems, and more as the brand continues to explore this timeless technology. You'll feel like a real life James Bond in no time.

"It doesn't tap on the smart watch market because it's not a smart watch at all," says Bulgari president

Jean-Christophe Babin. "The Bulgari **Diagono Magnesium** is what we call an intelligent watch, which uses a completely different technology and is purely Swiss." Finally, and for the first time, a time-

piece that adapts to the high-tech advancements offered by trendy smart watches, including government-level security for storing data, and retains the qualities of a true luxury mechanical timepiece has

come to fruition. This groundbreaking innovation is made possible through Bulgari's partnership with Wisekey, a top Swiss data storage and digital security facility, which helped develop the Diagono Magnesium's patented security technology called "asymmetrical encryption," a Bulgari exclusive. "The main data that the watch stores is an encrypted key. You need both the smartphone—which is itself usually secured by fingerprint these days—and the watch to have access to the sensitive data," Babin explains. "The encryption is of the highest security level, called asymmetric, and is certified to be used for sensitive government applications."

The use of NFC also makes a huge difference, requiring a closer distance between your watch and

your phone, making it less accessible and prone to hackers unlike Bluetooth, WiFi, and other existing wireless technologies. Your data is stored in the app, which can hold as much as your tab-



let or phone permits, and most are in the "cloud," physically on the servers of Wisekey in army bunkers hidden in the Swiss mountains, which offers unlimited storage. "This cloud of data is pushed to the app and stored temporarily in the app on the smartphone, but not in the watch, which only contains the 'key' and the watch key technical and manufacturing data. And again only the wearer of the watch can read the data," says Babin.

Of course, as this is a fully mechanical watch, it does not need batteries to work. Instead, the NFC chip takes its energy from the nearby smartphone or tablet to start interfacing. This selfwinding movement, 42-hour power reserve, and all-Swiss manufacturing make the Diagono Magnesium a true luxury timepiece, bearing the Bulgari elements of design and quality. As its name implies, the watch features magnesium as its main material (quite rare for watchmaking) which is almost 40 percent stronger yet lighter than aluminum. To avoid oxidation and corrosion as well as allow more colors in design, the magnesium is topped with a special Motorlac coating, a technique usually done to protect engines of Maseratis and Ferraris. All in all, with its 41mm diameter and modern look, this is a watch for a strong, avantgarde gentleman.

What of the future? Well, the Diagono Magnesium is made to be future-proof. The paradox is somehow fixed by Bulgari. "They say luxury is hardly compatible with technology as technology evolves very quickly. And usually when you think about a Bulgari watch you usually think about timelessness. You don't want a luxury watch to be obsolete in a couple of years. With the Bulgari Diagono Magnesium, there is no obsolescence as the NFC and antenna system embedded in the watch are timeless in terms of performance and functionality," assures Babin. "Techno evolution has been moved out of the watch, and into the app and the cloud which are both 'evolutive,' but without challenging the watch timelessness. This is one of the differences with the new smart watches offered by competitors. They are doomed by short life cycles and limited power autonomy." This, however, is an intelligent watch for eternity—a true luxury. 12

Greenbelt 4, Makati City.



CHOPARD'S ULTRA-THIN TIMEPIECES AND RACECAR-INSPIRED WATCHES IS FOR THE GENTLEMAN OR THE YOUNG MAN. BY CLIFFORD OLANDAY

It's not all about ice. Though you are most likely to associate Chopard with the flash of the red carpet, specifically that of the Cannes Film Festival, where its diamonds have most recently adorned the bodies of bombshells like Charlize Theron and Doutzen Kroes, the Swiss-based luxury house in fact offers a very strong collection of watches for men.

Consider the L.U.C collection. Created as an homage to Louis-Ulysse Chopard, the watchmaker who founded the company in 1860, its pieces are characterized by an understated design, ultra-thin proportions, and hand-done decorations. These are most suited for the sophisticated gentleman or, as Chopard Asia managing director Chris Neff, who himself wears a L.U.C Chrono One, describes, a person who has "an understanding and appreciation of the craftsmanship that goes into each piece." He knows, for example, that the quietness of white gold and, more important, an in-house movement give his Chrono One tremendous value.

If you are, however, new to Chopard, there is the Classic Racing collection. The house and its owners take part in many famous races—Karl-Friedrich Scheufele, co-president of the company, participates in the Mille Miglia, the legendary competition of which Chopard has also been the official timekeeper for over 25 years—and the line reflects the close ties of the Scheufeles and motorsports. Thus the watches are inspired by racecars, from the tire-like rubber strap of a Mille Miglia to the vellow racing ring of a Grand Prix de Monaco Historique to the see-through engine finish of a Superfast. "These watches have a certain modernity and a

trend element in terms of color choices and design details," says Chris, who alse sees the line for young executives looking to start their watch collection.

But that doesn't mean that a gentleman will not look good with the rossa corsa (racing red) dial of a Mille Miglia or a young man can not appreciate the orbital moon-phase display of a L.U.C Lunar One. "It's about natural attraction," he points out. "That's why we have a wide selection that speaks to different individuals." Which leads us to an interesting story about a very particular preference. In Southeast Asia, you'd be surprised to know how diamond watches, full-set diamond watches, are appealing to men. "That never existed before, specially not in Europe, probably not also in the US," notes Chris. A collector in Vietnam has, in fact, bought two icedout watches from Chopard, which offers existing diamond models, including the L.U.C Tourbillon Baguette (amazingly decked out in 300 diamonds), and custom creations—a service that is also possible in the Philippines.

And how do you wear these brilliant watches, which will certainly draw attention to your wrist and inevitably yourself? "The choice of a watch always reflects your personality, right?" Chris reiterates. "It's just a matter of finding the right personality for the right watch. And this exists—people who like to stand out with a very unique accessory." In other words, if the sparkle of diamonds speaks to you, wear it with full confidence. If not, the elegance L.U.C or the vibrant energy of Classic Racing are also very fine choices. M. Greenbelt 5, Makati City.

Style

FOR THE CAPTAIN

The DB navy peacoat in water-resistant Melton wool can be traced back to the Royal Navy. Paul & Shark maintains its shorter length "because if we decide to make an iconic item, we must make it the right way"—right down to its painted amber buttons.

FOR THE SAILOR

Inspired by the men

fisherman sweater is made from Shetland

wool that has been

and more wearable for today's times.'

reworked into "some-

thing gentler, stronger,

of Channel Island, the





FOR THE ADVENTURER

"The Norge parka was originally done in waxed Italian cotton lined with wool fur and down feather. Our Norge parka truly respects the design and materials with only one exception: no whale waxing, because that smells bad."





FOR THE YACHTSMAN

Worn by the 918 Dragon Squad in World War I, the Yachting 918 sweater is revisited with water-repellent knits, reinforced shoulders, elbow patches and a wind-proof collar.

HIGH TIDE

HERITAGE CLOTHING FROM ITALY'S MARITIME HISTORY IS MADE EVEN BETTER WITH TECHNOLOGY. BY JOHN A. MAGSAYSAY

"The dress code of the Italian maritime for the last 2,000 years was not truly geared to protect you from rain or frost, but more to protect you from the sunshine, the sweating, and the wearing out—and to make you feel extremely comfortable," begins Andrea Dini, president of Italian clothing company Paul & Shark.

But whether the clothes protected against cold and wet or hot and dry, there was "definitely more glamour" because, as Andrea points out, the Italians simply possessed a lot of style. "Yes, they are working garments, but always with a touch of class and design," he says.

It was Andrea's grandfather, Gian Ludovico, who founded Dama S.p.A. in 1957. What would become the parent company of Paul & Shark started out as a wool mill that supplied spun yarns to the fashion houses of Dior and Balenciaga. "He was truly concentrated on quality. He'd always tell me that giving the highest quality possible to your customer is the best investment you can make because the customer will respect you," Andrea remembers. And it was his father, Paolo, who on a visit to Maine, chanced upon an 18th-century clipper whose sail was painted with the words Paul & Shark. With this serendipitous discovery, the company synonymous to luxury yachting style set sail.

Now that it is Andrea's turn to steer the ship—and

with no intention to rock the boat-he has chosen to focus on the 45-year-old company's expertise: a strong maritime heritage and innovative sense of production. "It's using modern technology to duplicate an iconic technique from the past," he explains. In their workshop in Northern Italy, Paul & Shark employs technologies in waterproofing and breathable knits, a combination once completely unheard of. The Typhoon 2000, for example, is a way to laminate the finest Italian wools and cottons without shrinking or baking them.

> The resulting fabric, lightweight but weatherproof, is used in the collared shirts and stretch cotton satin trousers of their Competition Line. Another innovation, the watershed technique involves rinsing woven knits in natural oil in order to mimic a finish from 200 years ago, when overcoats were slathered in whale oil for supreme water-resistance.

> But while manufacturing is infused with technology, Paul & Shark steadfastly maintains a look that is timeless, a nod to Italy's heritage. "To be honest, these items were not invented by us," says Dini. "I can say, however, that we reinvented them." [8]

....... Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City and City of Dreams Manila, Parañaque City.



Grooming



CUT AND SHAVE

The barbershops of basketball specialty store Titan now use Baxter of California hair and shaving products in their grooming services.

DAILY FACE WASH

Mild cleansers from coconut and antiinflammatory plant extracts leave the skin refreshed, smooth, and soft to the touch.





HARD WATER POMADE

This water-based styling formula is enhanced with elastic fibers to define hairstyles with firm hold and texture. Creates that piece-y look. Blends into and rinses out of hair easily.



WHITE WOOD CANDLES

And now, something for your room. These soy-wax candles provide woodsy, masculine scents: Number 2 contains mission fig and vetiver, while Number 3 has birch tar, leather, and cedar.

HELLO, MR. BAXTER

THE FOR-MEN-ONLY GROOMING LINE BORN IN CALIFORNIA ARRIVES IN MANILA

It was dry skin that began a grooming revolution. In the '60s, after moving from New York to Los Angeles, Baxter Finley realized that the golden sun of La La Land was not good for his skin. So he looked for a moisturizer to soothe it, but all he found were pink-tinged creams that smelled of flowers. It was then that Baxter decided to create his own. And in 1965, with the Super Shape men's skin conditioner, a balm of that protects against sun and sea, Baxter of California, was born.

With the success of Super Shape, Baxter began churning out more men's products, from the Enriched Night Cream and the Under Eye Concentrate to a vitamin-enriched soap and a soothing shaving cream. By the '70s, Baxter of California developed a solid reputation for producing products specially formulated for men's skin. Everyone,

from the guy next door to the Hollywood hotshot, was slapping their mugs with its products.

Today, Baxter of California offers a wide range of men's products that target very specific skincare needs. The high-tech assortment works alone or in tandem, providing men with intelligent skincare solutions for anti-aging, shaving, cleansing, and basic skincare. A good place to start? The fragrance-free Daily Face Wash washes dirt and grime away without robbing your skin of moisture. No dry and tight feeling. It leaves skin smooth and soft to the touch. Also available are hair pomades with versatile holds and textures and wood-scented soy wax candles that burn up to 100 hours.

Ronnie & Joe, SM Aura and Power Plant Mall.

CODES OF CONDUCT

YOUR CHEAT SHEET TO SOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN VARIOUS SITUATIONS

PG. 50 NO. 22: THE MEN'S ROOM

What to wear (on your feet), what to touch, when to go



NO. 72 ELEVATORS

Where to stand, how to exit, when to take the freight or the stairs



NO. 37 FUNERALS

How to approach the casket, how to give a eulogy, when to cry

No. 22: The Men's Room

Inquiries into—and strategies for—the shy, the germ-fearing, and the barefooted

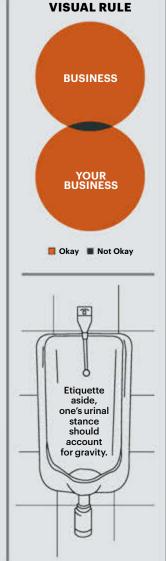
It's just a place where what's inside comes out. Confidence, too: One man may be too shy to leave his stall till the room clears, yet he'll then help a quiet, struggling elder stranger raise his pants; while another may stand with his legs spread wider than necessary, only to handle the faucet with a paper towel to shield himself from the ickies. Which is to say it's a place where posturing can't matter, since each and every entrant turns out to be a walking bag of too much liquid or solid or gas. Nothing more. (The excretory system is a blunt equalizer.)

And so: Acknowledge one another but not recklessly. If you are joining at the urinal row, speak only if your counterpart will recognize you by your voice. If not, save it for the sinks. Remember that everyone has been raised to hold what happens here as a private act since their parents told them it's time to wipe their own ass. This is not a gallery; the line starts outside the door. One knock and a test of the lock will do. Everyone knows everyone's clock is ticking. Though nobody needs to hold any kind of door.

Otherwise? Everybody has been practicing the routine. Diversions feel strange. The soap is hardly ever remarkable; same goes for the latest in hand-drying technology. Seat piss is the trademark of an unruly rogue element raised by actual wolves and therefore incapable of being reasoned with, at least not in this enclosed space, we don't think. And some things are too private to do in public, like flossing.

MINOR
CATASTROPHE
NO. 03:
GUN-SHYNESS

Stress, such as the pressure brought about by having an audience, can constrict the bladder's neck, causing momentary or even prolonged "hesitation." (That's the medical term.) But there are other possible constrictors as well, such as an enlarged prostate. If the problem occurs regularly, one would do well to avoid Sudafed and coffee, both of which send a mild dose of epinephrine to receptors in the bladder neck, causing it to tighten. And try not to wait too long to go—an overinflated bladder can't push particularly well. In the most shy of times, if possible, go someplace where you can sit. It helps the pelvic floor relax.



VISUAL RULE: FOOTWEAR



ILLUSTRATIONS (LEFT) PETER OUMANSKI AND (OPPOSITE) CHRIS PHILPOT

The Case for (Some) Urinal

A few years back, we were quartered on a floor in an old office building. The men's room featured two urinals, as most office-building restrooms do. The unfortunate thing was that there was no divider of any kind between the urinals. To make matters worse, the urinals were mounted so close together that it was possible-maybe even likelythat your shoulder and the shoulder of the other urinator would come into contact. Which was awkward. There's a possibility that this situation has happened only to us. But it made the eternal question of whether or not to engage in conversation with the person at the next urinal significantly easier to answer. You had to. There are few things more awkward than inadvertently rubbing up against another man who is in the midst of urinating—unless it's doing so without comment. Which may explain why we hold it to be appropriate-maybe even polite-to verbally acknowledge the presence of the guy standing next to you, divider or not. Not so much conversation as a greeting-maybe a rhetorical question, the answer to which will be drowned out by the cascade of noise when you flush.

REGARDING **GERMS**

A formally scientific answer to the query "Should I touch that?"



Surfaces covered in bacteria

Surfaces fine to touch (with your hands)

Nearly every surface in a bathroom is covered with microbes—the toilet seats and handles, the urinals, the floor, the faucets, the soap dispensers, your own hands. Just coated with the things. And almost none of them will make you sick. Because very few of the bacteria on bathroom surfaces are pathogens. Moreover, the microbes that naturally coat your hands will protect you from picking up stray microbes; it's actually more likely that you'll leave microbes behind than pick them up.

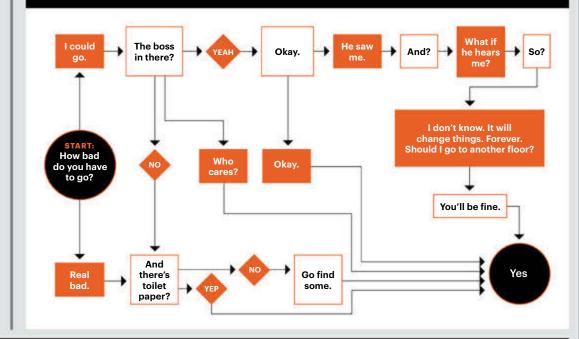
This doesn't mean you shouldn't wash your hands. You should—focusing on your fingertips, which get the closest to fecal matter and are the most likely to go into your mouth or nose, where pathogens become problematic. (Similarly, licking and snorting surfaces is ill-advised.) You should also use, when possible, regular soap, since the antibacterial kind can remove your hands' good microbes. What this does mean, though, is that you can stop trying to open the door handle with your elbows.

The Only Acceptable Question

"The fk are you doing here?"— which is maybe the most welcoming question you can say to someone in the office restroom. Far more so than a "How are you?" or "'Sup?" The setting works a weird magic on it. The answer is so obviouswhich makes it all the more unexpected, which makes it better suited to making people laugh or counterquip. Dead-pan it, perhaps with some emphasis on the you. Or the fk. And take care not to confuse it with "What the fk are you looking at?"

SHOULD YOU GO?

Some humble, flowcharted encouragement



Consultants: Dr. Harry Fisch, clinical professor of urology and reproductive medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College/New York-Presbyterian Hospital; Sean Gibbons, author of the study "Ecological Succession and Viability of Human-Associated Microbiota on Restroom Surfaces," published in Applied and Environmental Microbiology,



No. 72: Elevators

Unspoken codes of conduct, button pushing (both literal and figurative), and rescue by harness

The Rules: Act like you've been there before. Don't go on with muddy feet. Use a nod to acknowledge the presence of others. Don't talk about fantasy football. Don't talk about your job. Don't bitch about your cold. Don't mention your cold. Don't look at the person standing next to you five times while you try to remember his name. Be small while you ride, even if you're a big person. Keep your hands at your sides. Be still. If you are traveling more than 20 floors, don't sigh and push your button again and again. Don't push buttons out of curiosity unless you're alone on a weekend in a darkened office tower. Then push them all. But don't push the stop button—even if you're only trying to reenact a scene from a movie-there is always an alarm. Don't eat apples loudly. Don't gulp sodas. Don't make noises while

drinking with a straw. Don't flash any part of yourself or initiate sex unless it's after 1:00 a.m. and you're in a Marriott. At a casino, leave the chips in your pocket and flip off the camera. Go ahead and talk on your cell phone, asshole. No matter what the sign says, it's always okay to take the freight elevator. Understand that you may not know where you are when you get off. Just defer to the movers, the maids, and the deliverymen. In an empty freight elevator, it's okay to sing. In an empty passenger elevator, it's okay to tap-dance. Hold the door when you can. Push buttons for people when they ask. To everyone else on an elevator, you are either in the way or soon to be left behind. When the doors close, forget about yourself. Don't worry, it's guaranteed you'll be there when they open again. -TOM CHIARELLA

WHERE TO STAND. **BASED ON ORDER OF ENTRY**

Scenario 1: **Buttons on left**



1: If you will depart on an early floor, choose A to minimize your exit's path through the scrum. Otherwise, remain at B. 2: If you like pushing buttons, stay at C. No? D.

Scenario 2: Buttons on both sides



The goal is to create spatial symmetry in order to maximize the scrum region and to maintain passenger sanity.

> A FEW MORE THINGS, GENTLEMEN

By Helene Rubinstein.

opinionated Esquire editorial director and seasoned rider of elevators If you have to have a conversation, please keep it to a murmur. Laughing is altogether forbidden. > If the walls are mirrored, do not stare at yourself or pick at your eyebrows as if you were in your bathroom at home. A quick glance is allowed, but that's it. > Just because you make brief eye contact on a rainy day does not

mean you need to comment on the weather.

THE VISUAL RULE: POSITIONING







ALWAYS SOMETIMES NEVER

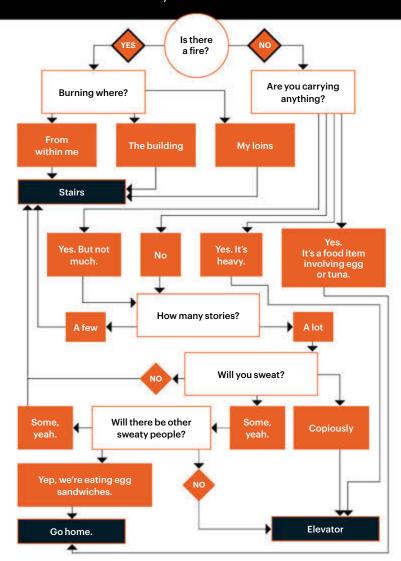


THE EXIT ORDER

- 1. The elderly 2. Everybody else—in order of door proximity and efficiency.* 3. You (Unless you're blocking the door. Here, efficiency trumps politeness.)
- *A NOTE ON FLEVATOR CHIVALRY: To let a woman exit first should not simply be an attempt to tend to her. She is capable of walking through a doorway on her own. Rather, it is a gesture of acknowledgment, not of her gentleness (who says she's gentle?) but of her existence. The gesture demonstrates awareness-of the people around you, of not needing to put yourself first. It's a nice thing to do for anyone, really.

SHOULD YOU BE TAKING THE STAIRS?

A handy self-assessment





REGARDING **THE CLOSE-DOOR** RUTTON

If the button does function and therefore closes the door slightly quicker than the elevator's automated timer, you look like a man who swears he doesn't have even three seconds to spare and doesn't know how little three seconds is. The act renders you the very image of impatience. If the button doesn't function, like most nowadays (unless a designated mechanic or fireman switches the elevator into a different operational mode in order to execute a rescue), you look like a man who swears he doesn't have even three seconds to spare, doesn't know how little three seconds is, and doesn't understand that what he's doing to regain that tiny, tiny, tiny moment does nothing. It renders you the very image of impotence. Like a caveman humping markings on a wall.

SO YOU'RE STUCK

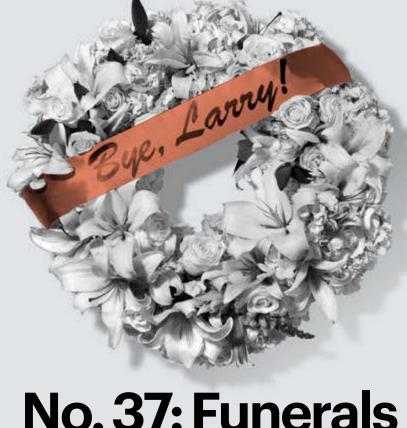
How to manage a crisis of inconvenience

- > Try the open-door button if you're on a floor. People often forget.
- > Failing that, call security, hit the emergency button, call 911, or bang on the wall with your shoe.
- > You might be stuck for a few hours. Know there's no inherent danger in being stuck in an elevator. The real risk: boredom and
- > If needed: deep breaths. In through your nose for a count of three; out through your mouth for six.
- > Understand that a panic attack is just

- your hypothalamus nagging your adrenal gland to the point that it spits out chemicals that raise your heart and breathing rates. (Knowing the physiology can make it easier to manage.)
- Make conversation, crack jokes. Distract yourself and the people around you.
- > Make eye contact when you give comfort. Offer water if you have it.
- ▶ Easiest exit: floor level. A fireman or an elevator mechanic will shut off the power and then use a key to open the door.
- If the elevator is partly on a floor and the

- doors open, do not climb out. The elevator could begin moving again and crush you.
- Next-easiest exit: between floors. Either a mechanic will use the control panel to float the elevator to the nearest floor, or a fireman will block off shaft openings and assist vou out.
- **Least easy** but most adventurous exit: You are stuck in a blind shaft—where an express elevator skips floors—so there aren't any door openings for several stories. Firemen will descend into the shaft on ropes and use a harness to haul you out.

CONSULTANTS: Michael Fox, chief of special operations for the Chicago Fire Department; Ben Johnson, director of the Rhode Island Center for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; Kay Allensworth, clinical director of the Central Texas Critical Incident Stress Management Team; Robin Haight, president-elect of the Virginia Academy of Clinical Psychologists.



No. 37: Funerals

Consoling, laughing, and shutting up in a roomful of grieving loved ones—and strangers, too

As rites of passage go, funerals are the best. Nothing wrong with hope or joy or jewelry, but no other human rit-

ual short of war brings you face-to-face with death. No gifts, no RSVP, no chitchat with the guest of honor-just a long look down into the void.

And you-all youth and strength and beauty, by comparison at least, for now-you have certain duties. First of all: Show up. If there is any doubt at all, don't think, go. It's tough to imagine a circumstance—absent a restraining order—in which someone's presence at a funeral could provoke resentment. Not paying your respects in person may be held against you. If actual circumstances prevent you from even a brief stop by, then write a sentence or two of regret and condolence inside a card and mail it.

Also: Shut up. Beyond "I'm so sorry for your loss," don't fret about what to say or how. Your presence proves you care; you're offering communal support to the living at a time of personal grief and hardship, when humanity writ small counts on it most. Kudos.

Also: Dress well, but quietly.

Different tribes practice different postfuneral customs. Go with the flow. As a Jew, I'm most familiar with "sitting shivah," a weeklong period of mourning observed at the family's home, commencing right after burial and marked by vast quantities of comfort food. In the face of death, we chew. Should you call upon the family during shivah, bring food. You can't go wrong with a nice dessert, but consider herring. Pickled, cream, or schmaltz? Your call.

-SCOTT RAAB

THE TOOL: HANDKERCHIEF

A handkerchief must be both resilient—easily thrown in the wash after use—and gentle on the skin. It should be 100 percent cotton, kept pristine, and unstained. It should be white. Moments that require a handkerchief must be treated with humility, not flamboyance. White bears with it surrender. You should always carry one tucked in your inner breast pocketsmall enough to be discreet, large enough to do its work—as you never know when you may need one, though inevitably you will need one at a funeral. If not for you, then for another.

-JESSIE KISSINGER

Regarding Children

Pay as much attention to them as to their parents, especially if they are siblings of the dead. The bond between siblings is especially strong. Talk to them, play with them. If they want to run around, let them run. They're dealing with the loss in their own way.

VISUAL RULE: APPROACHING THE CASKET







ILLUSTRATION PETER OUMANSKI

ALWAYS SOMETIMES

THE RULES OF GIVING A **EULOGY**

You must write it down.

Search for small truths. They don't have to be truths that evervone agrees on. iust ones they will recognize. Take notice of the unpolished details of a life. He protected his family above all else. She could sometimes be a bully. That man loved a cigar.

Avoid similes.

Don't sing, unless they ask you to. Even then, consider not singing.

You may cry. Accept it.

Address the people in the front row first. Then address the room, and only then the physical world outside. Those are your rings of lovalty.

You must make them laugh.

Distilled from Tom Chiarella's classic piece on the matter, from the September 2006 issue of Esquire. To read the full story, ao to esquire.com/ euloaies.

WHAT TO SA

During one-on-one encounters with the bereaved. All should be spoken with eye contact, brevity, and the knowledge that your presence will be remembered more than anything else.

	SAY	DON'T SAY
IF YOU KNOW THE BEREAVED, BUT NOT THE PERSON WHO DIED	What you're going to do to help them. Make it specific: bringing a meal, taking out the dog, taking out the neighbor's asshole dog that won't shut up. And, of course, "I'm sorry for your loss."	"How are you?" Or "What can I do?" Speak in statements.
IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE BEREAVED	Who you are and how you knew the person. Give a small detail or story about how he or she affected your life for the better.	Anything of length.
IF YOU'VE FALLEN OUT OF TOUCH	"It's good to see you. I'm sorry it's under these circumstances. But I wanted to be here." Consider a happy, shared memory.	"It's good to see you, though it would've been good to see you at Mom's funeral, too."
IF THE DEATH HAS CAUSED UNIMAGINABLE GRIEF	Little. "I'm sorry," with a hug or a handshake if you know them well. If the dead was sick for a long time, remember the person as he or she was; use the dead's name. Don't expect much response. They're in shock.	"How are you?!"

CONSULTANTS: Robert Zucker, grief counselor, author of The Journey Through Grief and Loss / Dr. Virginia A. Simpson, bereavement-care specialist / Paul Anderson, chaplain, Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region / Dr. Alan Wolfelt, director, Center for Loss and Life Transition / Kathleen Brannigan, chaplain, Loyola University Medical Center



Another Thing: Sign the **Book**

When they return home, the bereaved may not recall whom they spoke with or who showed up. Grief clouds memory. The book is what they will turn to. It becomes an indelible reminder of your support at a time when they may no longer be surrounded by loved ones ón all sides. Sign it.

How to Attend a Stranger's Funeral

Yes, it's a trespass. So do it quietly. Park at a distance; enter the church, the meeting hall, the pavilion neither first nor last. And mind you: Dress right, leave your presumptions at the door, be quiet, and lean into pure observation as if it might save you.

Some things are certain: the darkling cowl of grief sitting upon the face of men and women who have lived lives, worked jobs, raised children, walked the garden of this life without one shred of certainty except this very day. And more to come. You may see the coffin or the corpse, the urn or the ashes. You will encounter candles and giant photos and impossibly stupid collages. And if you are lucky, there will be stories, anecdotes, poems spit from the mouths of remarkable

cousins, and music picked by love itself or just some long-forgotten car trip in the '80s.

If you sit there and forget yourself for a while, you'll realize that a funeral is the one really elegant thing we do for one another, each in our own way. One last shot at dignity. The single moment when we are called to consider, if not speak, our most irreducible truths about what matters in a life. You will learn that each of us—that any of us—might really matter.

Then leave. No handshakes, no attention-getting lies about why you came. You arrived by yourself. You can exit that way.

TOM CHIARELLA









A FEAST AT SUNSET

THE ESQUIRE WEEKEND COOKOUT WAS THE PERFECT WAY TO ENJOY GOOD FOOD: WITH MUSIC, FAIR SUMMER WEATHER, AND THE COMPANY OF FRIENDS

The Kirov driveway of The Proscenium at Rockwell came alive on a pleasant summer afternoon last April as Esquire Philippines held its first ever Weekend Cookout—a casual sunset barbecue to celebrate good food and drink. With The Moment Group's chefs behind the state-of-the-art cooking equipment by Viking Ranges, dishing out cheeseburger sliders from 8 Cuts and baby back ribs from Cue, it didn't take very long at all before crowds began to gather for a delicious bite to eat. Pile coolers of San Miguel Super Dry, Premium All Malt, and Cerveza Negra on top of that and vou're set. Renowned mixologist Enzo Lim took the bar and served his own concoctions as well.

The Cookout also happened to double as an excellent display of season-appropriate street style, as guests were in light, comfortable clothing for summer. Esquire editors were dressed for the weather, clad in Uniqlo's summer collection. The stylish Subaru Outback and Subaru Legacy were also present to greet guests as they arrived.

The Esquire Weekend Cookout turned out to be a relaxed, yet festive sunset barbecue. Toni B and Imago kept the music light and easy as dusk gave

Esquire



COOKOUT

way to the evening, and guests continued to enjoy the exquisite food and plentiful libations through the night. It was a truly great way to revel in the summer and indulge in some honest-to-goodness grub.

Erwin Romulo with Shawn Yao; 2. Toni B. hangs out before taking to the stage for her performance; 3. Art Navarro, Romina Nañagas and Margie Pegels; 4. Erwin Romulo with Zach Lucero of Imago; 5. The top-of-the-line equipment of Viking Ranges were perfect for cooking up good food; 6. The Subaru Legacy and Subaru Outback parked by the side of the Cookout; 7. San Miguel Lifestyle Brews kept the drinks flowing; 8. Imago, setting the mood for the night; 9. Menswear Syndicate's Kevin Yapjoco, Victor Basa, Edmond Lim and Jason Qua; 10. Jed Sazon and Paolo Villanueva of San Miguel Lifestyle Brews, Krizia Guingon of Starcom, Louise Yao of San Miguel Lifestyle Brews, Dianne Suegay of Summit Media, Finj Abecia and Lex Avena of Starcom; 11. The Uniqlo team enjoying beer and burgers: Dong Ronquillo, Binna Kim, Joanna Perlas, Takatoshi Tanaka, Jasmin Cruz, Geraldine Sia, Morise Masahiko, Oga Toshiyuki, Earlene Reyes 12. Enzo Lim serving up his special drinks for the night; 3. Imago at the Proscenium showroom

















Esquire

JULY 2015

NOTES & ESSAYS

PANJEE TAPALES ON GROWING UP SASHA MARTINEZ ON LITERARY LONGING **GRACE TALUSAN** ON LOOKING FOR FAMILY

EDITED BY SARGE LACUESTA ARTWORKS BY J. PACENA II IMAGES COURTESY OF BLANC GALLERY

NOTES & ESSAYS

ARE WE THERE YET?

There is no crowning achievement, only progress.

PANJEE TAPALES

Sometimes it feels like yesterday: the moment my sister and I discovered the rich, brown soil we were tilling was not the mother lode of chocolate, my tiny green flip-flops heavy with the weight of the river, or the scratchy pink and yellow gingham smocks with large buttons that were my kindergarten uniform. Has it really been decades since? Other times it seems ancient: a familiar scent that wafts unexpectedly, its source no longer within reach. Memories cascade, a fine and subtle mix of happy and not so, of endless days on an idyllic farm, napping on musty banigs, the sudden flash of slightly treacherous steps up a beloved tree house. Then the mysterious whispers of a once-giggly grandmother made suddenly somber. The end of days at the farm. Colors turn grey and misty.

Things happen to us when we are little. We are without choice, plunked at the receiving end of decisions and situations created by others: where we live, study, even what we eat, drink and breathe. We have no idea whether any of this will manifest as neurosis or strength, gift or weakness. They are simply events that become memories over time, random images that may bloom into emotions and feelings later on, of discomfort or warmth, contentment or strife.



was my first sense of life's largely invisible quotient. Heaviness, tension, and hostility enveloped us, widening a chasm that would not be bridged. The situation was mired in sludge. We asked them, a few times, why they didn't stay together. The stock answer—the only thing they were united on: one day you will understand. Years later, I wonder why they thought they were compatible. Maybe that was understanding. Today we can all have Christmas dinner together and be grateful for time's healing powers.



When my youngest was a little older than two, my own marriage ended. I worried that I was consigning the same story to my boys, simply because I couldn't find a way through. What followed was a long swim in the muck of my life, from which I surfaced with new perspective: my childhood was not their inevitable inheritance. It was preparation for that particular point in my biography and a chance at making better choices for my children. They are free from my emotional exigencies. Their father and I can celebrate their milestones as a family, albeit under a

different and changing constellation. For them we strive to bury the hatchet, despite its persistent reappearance at our doorsteps. Life's seeming tragedies can be lessons that benefit subsequent generations, if we take the time to apply perspective and choice.

The past is not our only teacher. My kids raise me as much as I raise them. Every decision I've had to make on their behalf, simply because they were not yet able, taught me grit and resolve. Every failing—and there are many-brings me squarely to the mirror. Every decibel raised in frustration or worse,

Above: Bato Sa Langit, 2015

childish rage, and the expression of shock and pain we never want to inflict on them change, age and grow us. All of a sudden I am my parents, chin deep in the double task of raising my kids and myself.

This much I have learned: life is a series of questions answered only by more questions, and they are relentless. With children, the luxury of pondering is all but taken away. Life with them demands action and faith in equal measure, despite the frequent appalling lack of clarity. For them I have had to wake up and explore elements of myself I could not imagine. I am warrior, healer, comedian, or whatever else they need me to be. Because of them I commit to being strong, relevant and unapologetically comfortable in my own skin. Today, that is a goal that resonates. But they have also taught me that may not be true tomorrow, and I will be back at my evolving drawing board, scratching at a new surface.

It has taken decades to accept that growing up is a lifelong task—of finding connections in the dark, interior spaces we would rather avoid. It is being able to look objectively upon our life stories and develop some compassion for everyone in it, ourselves included, and then exercising strength to let go of what was given but no longer belongs. There is no crowning achievement, only progress. It seems the work of being human is to be

steadfast on this path of growing not just up but down, sideways, inside and out towards true autonomy. It is the way to our necessary advancement.

There is comfort in knowing that the years will equip us with freedom, perspective, courage and perseverance to exercise them. (And let's not forget to laugh along the way!) It is consciousness, hard-won, that will eventually direct our experiences and shape our lives towards something that is finally ours, and maybe in the service of something greater. This is a journey that outlives us, that will continue with those we walk with and leave behind, each story so complex, so different, and yet the same—connected by threads that weave through eternity.

So it begins again.

PANJEE TAPALES
Education advocate and writer



READ AND WANT

Consider the peculiar dangers of provoking desire through the books one reads.

SASHA MARTINEZ

01 — In one of the more recognizable poems of Mark Strand, a weary couple shares the reading of a single book—a book that transforms and changes the timbre of its provocations in accordance with whose hands cradle it. At one point in the sprawling poem, the husband looks on at his wife reading, and he intones: "You have the impulse to close the book / which describes my resistance: / how when I lean back I imagine / my life without you, imagine moving / into another life, another book."

02 - Consider the peculiar dangers of provoking desire through the books one reads: how words on a page can remind you of a longing you thought you'd long ago calmed, or tease you into considering the weight of someone else's gaze, or galvanize you into crossing a once-interminable distance to take the wrong person's hand in yours and confess a wanting. Consider this unflinching definition of desire, brought forward by Siri Hustvedt via the very first line of an essay: "Always a hunger for something, and it always propels us somewhere else, toward the thing that is missing." (And, here, remind yourself of Anne Carson declaring, "Desire moves. Eros is a verb.") See yourself armed with your desire and your library. And then, please, consider yourself in a reality where you moved, arms laden with the books that compelled you.

03 – So celebrated for its stark rendering of readerly downfall: Gustave Flaubert's Madame Bovary, a record of the misfortunes of a country girl who damned herself through intemperate bookishness, she who petulantly pinned her desires on fiction. No other heroine is as well-known for being inflamed by reading-particularly, the reading of tawdry novels, novels about love and lust, novels that inspire wistful gazes out kitchen windows-than Emma Bovary. Poor Emmain the tradition of the mad Don Quixote who charged forward to vanquish windmills-who willfully transcends the banalities of married provincial life, an ambition originally sparked by the bookseller's wares. (Read and want and read and want and read and want, goes our Emma-until that very wanting defines her and a conviction takes root: I am meant for other things.) Emma who "tried to find

Left: Sa Ngalan Ng Ama, 2015

out just what was meant, in life, by the words 'bliss,' 'passion,' and 'intoxication,' which had seemed so beautiful to her in books." Emma, who liked to pick up a book, then, "dreaming between the lines, let it fall on her knees." Poor Emma who read her novels and, pushed to misery and destitution, swallows arsenic for the ultimate escape from reality.

04 — How easy it is to nod sagely at Emma's demise. How easy it is to be artless and condemn Flaubert's heroine for her flightiness, her betrayals, her selfishness, the greed of her imagined life. For her very daring to rage against dullness. For her desires, for her desiring. Emma's husband—"mediocre," Emma calls him, and it is his greatest sin in her eyes quietly despairs of Emma preferring to "stay in her room all the time and read." Emma's mother-in-law, after the younger Madame Bovary collapses into near-catatonic moroseness following a lover's abandoning, swoops in to forbid the reading of novels. The bookseller, the elder Madame Bovary is of the opinion, is nothing more than a "purveyor of poison."

05 — Consider the scene in Anaïs Nin's *The* Four-Chambered Heart where the heroine's lover burns all her books, in the attempt to rid [her] of every trace of the man she loved while she read them. (Remind yourself that Nin's heroine allows this horror but seethes, in parenthetical, He is only burning words.)

06 — And yet. For the reader who willfully looks-for the reader despairing enough, desperate enough, to plunder countless pages to look for a sentence to describe her, to scribble her wanting in the margins of her fictions—narrative is delightfully fraught with temptation, with justification, with vindication. With reason, with sensibility. With the promise of joy. Consider the sly subversion of neatly bound paper; consider Emma Bovary who read to seek "the imagined satisfaction of her own desires." See how Emma pores over her books over supper, turning the pages as the man she married sits across from her and keeps on talking. And, later, see how Emma-replete and triumphant for having surrendered herself to a man whose name she does not bear—recalls all the heroines of all the books she had read and how "this lyrical throng of adulterous women began to sing in her memory with sisterly voices that enchanted her." Remind yourself that when Emma finds as her first lover the young law student Léon, in him she begins to realize the longings her reading has sparked. And that young Léon understands: "She was the beloved of every novel," he thinks of Emma, "the heroine of every drama, the vague she of every volume of poetry."

07 — Consider how the husband in Strand's The Story of Our Lives goes on to tell his wife: "The book describes more than it should. / It wants to divide us." See this as the benediction you were looking for. Later: Consider

how-having moved, having allowed yourself to be propelled to the thing that was missing, having cleaved one's self from heathens who think of prose as poison, having stopped beggaring for satisfaction in mere imagining, having found a beautiful boy who thinks of you as that no-longer-nameless she in every leaf of poetry, having built a home where the words "bliss" and "passion" and "intoxication" do not settle for being just words, having now begun a life that allows you to let a book fall to your knees in the daydreaming because the no-longer-wrong person's hands is there to cradle both book and knee for you-consider how the books you will hold close next, perhaps in the years and years to come, will no longer compel you to think of other books, other lives. Consider this long longed-for calming of longing.

SASHA MARTINEZ Fictionist and essayist

IN SEARCH OF **TITO FREDDIE: A PERSONAL** CHRONICLE

I think this questioning of reality is a psychological tic that was created in me when I left one country and started again in a new one. My life in the Philippines had become as believable as a dream.

GRACE TALUSAN

In 1974, two years after Marcos declared Martial Law, my parents moved my older sister and me to the US. We were only supposed to stay for one year, no big deal. But this is the danger of change: you never know what else will shift. Your dreams might turn red, white, and blue.

They planned to return home to Manila with the pasalubong that my mother had been collecting for her family: plush towels and high thread count sheets from the clearance rack at Macy's in downtown Boston, where they were undergoing post-graduate medical training.

We survived our first New England winter. We moved to the suburbs where my parents bought a house on an acre of land. My father opened a medical clinic. My mother birthed three American citizens. And before we knew it, one year had turned into five, and in a

blink, 17 years passed without us ever return-

I don't blame my parents for keeping me away. Who wouldn't want to stay? In Boston, the mail appeared in our box every day and there weren't so many armed men.

As a budding writer, I started asking my parents questions about why we never left America. Soon, I learned the truth: We couldn't go home to the Philippines. We had overstayed our visas and our passports had expired. We were, as nativists like to call those without proper documentation, "illegals." We could be deported and lived in fear of this until President Reagan opened a pathway to US citizenship for people like us with his immigration act in 1986.

As soon as our papers were in order, we made plans to go home. But by then, I did not think of the Philippines as home.

This is what happens when a country systematically disappears: I lost my first language, Tagalog. I never heard the Philippines mentioned in the news and not too many people in my small American town had heard of the place. Sure, they knew the neighbors, China and Taiwan, where toys and electronics were made. And if their fathers and uncles had served in the military, they knew Subic and Clark bases and could say, "Mahal kita." We were not an affectionate family during those difficult early years in the States so I did not know that they were parroting, "I love you" nor did I wonder who taught those men that phrase.

It wasn't until college and graduate school that the profound and complex connections between the US and Philippines became clearer. I learned that the Filipinos fought back against the American colonial power. I learned about World War II and "I shall return." I found out that my great-grandfather, Captain Pedro Navarro, was part of a human display of Filipino people in the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. As the conductor of the Philippine Constabulary Band, Navarro's talents were showcased as evidence of US colonization's success. My grandmother, Navarro's daughter, told me that he led his band in Sousa marches so well that John Philip Sousa himself praised them. See what our little brown brothers can do?

With each year in the States, the Philippines became more of an imaginary place. If it wasn't for my maternal grandmother's yearly visits from the Philippines, I could not be certain that such a place actually existed beyond my family's stories. When my lola noticed that I always had a book in front of my face, she told me about her nephew, the writer Alfrredo Navarro Salanga. He was a prolific writer and could do all kinds: journalism, poetry, fiction, criticism, even plays.

You are becoming like your Tito Freddie, she told me.

Honestly, I didn't believe my grandmother. I could not conceive of anyone who looked like me as the author of a book. My grandmother was as real as the fairy godmother in Cinderella. She swooped in once a year bringing dried watermelon seeds, milk candies, and stories of this fantasyland called Manila, only to vanish without a trace. We did not call her (too expensive) or write letters (the mail would only get lost in the Philippine postal system).

My grandmother told me to write Tito Freddie a letter and she promised to handdeliver it to him. So in 1982, at ten years old, I wrote him a letter and forgot about it.

The next year, my grandmother returned with a letter tucked into a softcover book, titled Davao Harvest. The name Alfrredo Navarro Salanga was on the spine. I was amazed. Here was an actual book written by a real writer who was related to me. In my American suburb, I was at the public library every week, but had never encountered a book by a Filipino, much less one related to me. When it came time for my grandmother to return again to the Philippines, I wrote Tito Freddie another letter. I told him how much I loved his book. I was eleven years old and had desperately tried to read the literary anthology, but I felt I wasn't mature enough as a reader to make sense of it. So I lied.

By 1983, people in the US had heard of the Philippines because Benigno Aquino Jr., a Newton, Massachusetts resident for three years, had been assassinated. In October of 1984, my grandmother delivered another letter from Tito Freddie, the only one that I still possess, along with *In Memoriam: A Poetic Tribute by Five Filipino Poets*. Aquino's smiling face was on the cover of the yellow booklet. Tito Freddie wrote:

These poems cost us all a great deal of pain because the people who ordered him killed don't like the idea of people thinking him a hero. That may sound strange to you but it is true and that is why you should be thankful that you live in a country where you are free—to write about what you want to and to speak out your mind when you want to.

I was not yet a teenager, but old enough to understand the gravity of what he was saying without feeling condescension. He picked his words carefully.

In the same letter about Aquino, Tito Freddie wrote, "He was a great man who risked his life and lost it so that we Filipinos can be free. We're not free yet but we will be someday and by then I hope you can come over and pay a visit."

I'm sure I wrote back that I'd see him in Manila someday, but I wasn't serious. How could I go somewhere that seemed made-up?

I turned thirteen and my grandmother visited again, very excited about my pen pal's recent success. In 1985, the Philippine Jaycees awarded Alfrredo Navarro Salanga The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) Award for Literature and Journalism.

I kept my promise to my uncle and recently returned to the Philippines on a Fulbright

Right: Pamilyar, 2015

Fellowship. My official reason for being here was to work on a research project, but I really wanted to reconnect with the country that I had left. I wondered who I would have become if I stayed. I wanted to find what I had lost by living my life in a different place than the one I had started in. And I especially wanted to seek out my pen pal, but it was too late to meet him in person. He died soon after turning 40.

I knew it might be difficult to find Tito Freddie as he had died 27 years ago, but once I was in the Philippines, I looked for signs of him in libraries and bookstores, at his alma mater the Ateneo, at his widow Alice's apartment, and finally at his grave. I read his books, I touched his awards, I went through hundreds of pages of correspondence, "Thank You" notes that showed how generous he was with his time and resources, "I'm Sorry" letters from schools in the US that he hoped to either study or teach in, and surprisingly warm requests for payment from a bill collector that became sweeter the more time passed.

An aunt once told me that she had read the letters I had written Tito Freddie. "How is that possible?" I asked. She had seen them on display. I was embarrassed that my deepest girlhood yearnings were on display. I probably typed, "I want to be a writer someday." That aunt is dead now and no one I've asked has ever heard of my letters or the display. I looked, but didn't find my letters to him in the Ateneo archives. Without physical proof, I started to question whether I had even written them. I think this questioning of reality is a psychological tic that was created in me when I left one country and started again in a new one. My life in the Philippines had become as believable as a dream.

When I visited Tito Freddie's archive at Ateneo, I read his TOYM acceptance speech and learned about a painful part of his history.

In 1976, while Freddie was living in Mindanao, his friend Eman, a writer and activist who joined the New People's Army, was detained. Martial Law was in full swing and many thousands of people were detained.

Almost two weeks passed until they heard news. A cemetery worker had seen four bodies hastily buried at the Tagum municipal cemetery in Davao. Freddie accompanied the group of relatives and friends to the site, watching the men dig. Even when they saw the flash of skin against the earth, for a few moments, perhaps they still hoped. Maybe there had been a mistake.

But there was no error. Upon seeing his friend's remains, Freddie's reaction was in "near-hysterical tears," recounts Sylvia Mendez Ventura in her essay, "Emmanuel Lacaba: Poet-Warrior." And no wonder. Eman's hands and ankles were bound and "the flesh on his back had been macerated by the rocky terrain over which he had been dragged like a dead cow," Mendez Ventura writes.



Freddie did not leave Eman until his friend was returned to his family. Eman's brother, Jose F. Lacaba, never forgot what Freddie had done by helping to locate, exhume, and transport the body back to Manila, writing, "I will always be grateful to him for that." As horrific as the sight of his beloved friend's corpse was, Freddie did not look away. He did what writers do. He wrote, bearing witness to Eman and others in his work.

"Journalists nowadays are said to fear for



their own lives for doing what they must be about," Freddie said at that awards ceremony. He spoke about Alex Orcullo, a Davao writer who, driving home on his 38th birthday with his wife and young son in the car, was removed from his seat and shot thirteen times in the back. Even on a night when Freddie was being celebrated, he used the moment to tell the truth. As partygoers drank cocktails and shook hands with each other, Freddie named his colleagues, writers, who were cur-

rently sitting in jail cells because they had criticized the government. He dedicated the award to those in his generation who had been killed or imprisoned because of their beliefs about democracy and free speech. He said, "It is not I alone who walk this stage tonight but they too."

GMA Network journalist Howie Severino remarked that Freddie "was a writer in the worst of times. He had close friends who were killed by the military; he himself was jailed. He knew that he had gifts that had a higher purpose than just fame and fortune. He gave young writers like myself the gift of his example, and the gift of his time and attention. He knew much more than most that we would grow up and develop into people who could make a difference."

Tito Freddie did not just write poems, novels, short stories, and plays, he also wrote newspaper columns and articles. He was imprisoned for several months during Martial Law for writings critical of the Marcos dictatorship. Thirty years after Freddie gave that speech, the Philippines is still considered a deadly place to practice journalism. We are number 141 out of 180 countries on Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index. Over 30 journalists have been killed under the Aquino administration, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, which keeps track of Filipino journalists murdered in extrajudicial killings. After the president gave a speech on October 2014 vowing to stop attacks on journalists-yet at the same time seeming to insinuate that the victims were at fault-the NUJP responded with "Aquino cannot wash himself of the blood of those who have fallen under his watch and of those whose murders he continues to gloss over, for blaming the victims is tantamount to approval of the fate that befell them." A bottleneck in the judicial system and a culture of impunity means there is no justice for victims and their families.

Since 2010, the Philippines has held the third place spot on the Impunity Index created by the Committee to Protect Journalists. First and second on the list are Iraq and Somalia. This distinction reflects the stunning lack of convictions in cases where journalists are murdered.

Halfway through 2015, three people with ties to journalism have been killed. On January 8, Balanga City-based Abante reporter Nerlita Ledesma was shot by an unidentified gunman. On April 13 in Batangas City, former newspaper correspondent Melinda "Mei" Magsino was shot, also by an unidentified gunman. On Valentine's Day in Tagbilaran City, Maurito Lim was shot by an unidentified gunman. While these cases are still under investigation, if they are proven to be work-related not tied to a lover's triangle, land dispute, or other reason, Magsino's death marks the 173rd journalist murdered since 1986, according to the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility's database on media-related killings.

At a forum to mark World Press Freedom Day in April 2015, both US Ambassador to the Philippines Philip S. Goldberg and United Nations Resident Coordinator Terence Jones brought up the extra-judicial killings of journalists in the Philippines as barriers to press freedom. While the number of killings has declined in recent years, Ambassador Goldberg said, "We all have to work so that number becomes zero." In his speech,

Jones added: "Quality journalism enables citizens to make informed decisions about their society's development. It also works to expose injustice, corruption and the abuse of power." But the power of the press to improve society is weakened when people are afraid for their lives.

My sister Liza messaged me the image of the 1984 letter from Tito Freddie so I showed it to Alice, Freddie's widow, as we sat together at her dark apartment. She cried as she read it. In the letter he described a project he wanted to write, a biography of our common ancestor, Captain Pedro Navarro, and she cried because it was one of many projects that he did not have time to complete before his death. After a series of debilitating medical problems, in 1988, Tito Freddie died.

"He wrote beautifully, didn't he?" she said. Periodically, she would pull a book out from the shelf behind her and read a favorite poem.

His daughter, Lyrah, sat with us, getting up periodically to tend to her children. Lyrah is an award-winning writer and currently teaches at UP Diliman. Alice did numerology on my birthdate and said I should watch my temper. Then we shared a meal: *adobo*, homefermented cabbage, and a chocolate candy bar for dessert. We talked about the hard times the family faced after Tito Freddie's death. There were medical bills to pay and children to get through school. They moved residences many times and along the way, Alice sold Freddie's book collection, over 7,000 pieces, as many as the Philippines has islands, to help pay the bills.

While it was lovely to spend an evening with Tito Freddie's family, I felt as though I had arrived late to the party.

The only people I met in the States who knew Tito Freddie's work had studied Filipino literature, while almost everyone I asked in Manila was not only familiar with his work, but had known him personally. His roots in the literary community were deep. He founded the Philippine Literary Arts Council (PLAC) along with Gémino H. Abad, Cirilo F. Bautista, Ricardo M. de Ungria, and Alfred A. Yuson. In searching for Tito Freddie, I reached out to his friends, talking to Yuson, Bautista, and others. I found out that Tito Freddie acted in a film, Tikoy Aguiluz' Boatman (1984). He played a pimp.

During her 1989 visit, my grandmother broke the news that my pen pal had died. Then she handed me Turtle Voices in Uncertain Weather, Tito Freddie's posthumous collection. I carried that book with me to college, my first apartments, graduate school, back and forth across the country and now, with me to Manila on my Fulbright. Wherever I had a home, Turtle Voices was beside me the way that Gideon's Bible reliably sits in every hotel bedside's drawer. I especially loved the poem, "They Don't Think Much About Us in America," and returned to it often, when the microagressions of daily life as an Asian American got me down. I related to the anger in these lines, "The only



problem is/they don't think much/about us/ in America./ That's where Manila's/just as small as Guam is." There are also playful poems where the stanzas formed shapes on the page. Those poems made me feel braver about experimenting with the page.

Tito Freddie's final poems traveled with me throughout my life along with, as I later realized, a note of introduction from his friend, Isagani Cruz. While I was having dinner with my Fulbright mentor, I realized that this was the Dr. Cruz who had written the introduction to Tito Freddie's book. All this time, I never put together that this was the same person. I would not be in the Philippines again if it weren't for Dr. Cruz. Even though Tito Freddie was long gone, I felt he was still mentoring me, leading me to people and experiences that would help me progress as a writer. If I could not have my promised visit with Tito Freddie, meeting his many friends was a good proxy.

A few days later, I knelt at Freddie's grave and ran my finger across the stone: The carpenter no longer sings. The epitaph came from Tito Freddie's poem from *In Memoriam*, written after Aquino's assassination. Although this was my first visit to his grave, I had

Above: Sa Ngalan Ng Anak, 2015

walked past it many times to visit my grandparents and godparents a few rows away. Tito Freddie was buried steps away from the same grandmother who would hand-deliver his letters and books to me in Boston. I had traveled halfway around the world to search for my uncle in the Philippines, but his words have always been beside me. When I thought about my topics as a writer: undocumented immigrants in the US, my decision to remove my breasts and ovaries in order to prevent cancer, and other challenges, I felt Tito Freddie's courage had inspired me.

When I reread the letter that Tito Freddie wrote to my twelve-year-old self, I realized that I had misread his line. He was prolific, but also careful and thoughtful with his words. He wrote, "So I hope you do grow up to be a good writer." What did he mean by "a good writer?" Good as in skilled or talented? Or good as in performing good deeds? Whichever way you meant it, Tito Freddie, I hope so, too.

GRACE TALUSAN
Writer

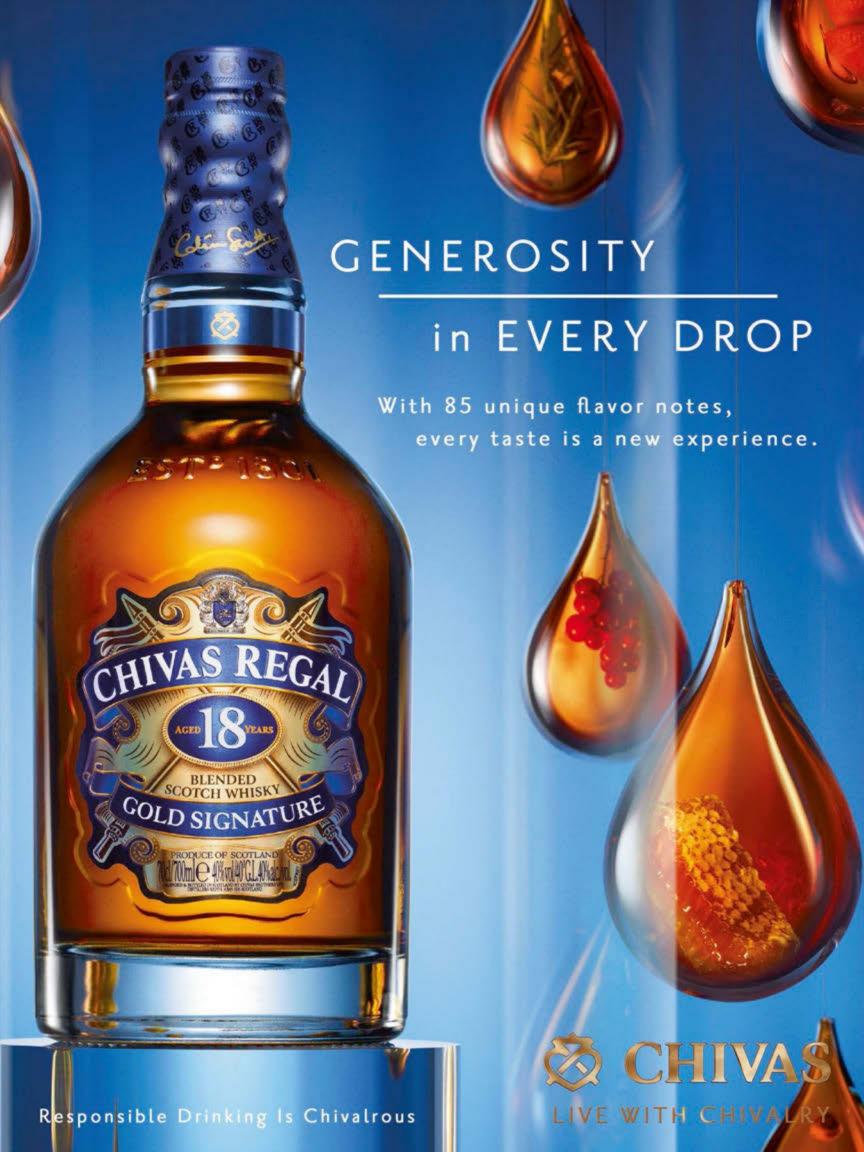




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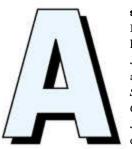




TLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS



Esquire



s office lore has it, our EIC, Erwin Romulo, was doing his morning stretches when Jerome Gomez texted him a message saying, "Let's do Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band by Louie Cordero." Jerome always has the best early-morning inspiration,

because he is usually out late at night drinking. We had the Beatles on our brain ever since David Guerrero let loose the latest DOT campaign timed to Ringo Starr's latest album, *Postcards from Paradise*, and were mulling over how or if we were going to put the former Beatle on the cover. Erwin for a long time had wanted to work with Louie Cordero for Esquire, and the audacity of a *Sgt. Pepper* homage fit the artist perfectly.

Louie happened to be in Bangkok, finishing an art residency. Erwin happened to fly to Bangkok for a workcation, and he tracked Louie down and they had drinks at a bar where he laid down the news. "Game," Louie said, "but wait, you want it when?!" A couple of weeks was too short a lead time to create an entire set, not to mention all the live people who must come together for the shoot. The team decided to move the Beatles cover to July, which was more appropriate as it would mark the 49th anniversary of the infamous Beatles in Manila show of July 1966, plus it is also the drummer's birthday (July 7). In the end, Ringo was to be the Starr of the cover, the culmination of ploys in the scheme to Bring Ringo Back.

Ringo was always considered to be the nicest, least pretentious of the Beatles. In a 1991 Simpsons episode, Ringo wrote a letter to Marge commending her for a painting she did of him in the '60s. "They took the time to write to me, and I don't care if it takes 20 years, I'm going to answer every one of them," the cartoon him says on the show. A deluge of fan mail IRL must have followed that 17 years later, which to be fair is a damn long time, Ringo released a bizarre video demanding people to stop sending him things to sign. "I'm warning you-with peace and love-I have too much to do. So no more fan mail!" At the time, there was no way he could have anticipated an avalanche of tweets and hashtags by a virally prone Filipino population that would accompany the release of his 18th album, much less a magazine cover that implores him to start over with us. We, the Filipinos, apologize for the mistreatment accorded the Beatles by our then-government. Things are different now, we'd like to think. So get back!

The original *Sgt. Pepper* album cover concept was essentially a who's who of people the Beatles liked. Ringo, being the most down-to-earth of the four, declined any naming rights and went along with whomever the others chose: John Lennon picked Hitler and Gandhi, both of whom were axed; George opted for four Indian gurus; Paul wanted Fred Astaire. Everyone agreed on

1. GREGORIO BRILLANTES
Writer

2. CLAUDE TAYAG
Chef

3. LIRIO SALVADOR Sound artist

4. JUAN FLAVIER
Public servant

5. ROBERTO CHABET Father of Philippine Conceptual Art

6. CORY AQUINO President

7. MAX ALVARADO Actor

8. FRANCISCO COCHING Pillar of Philippine Komiks

> 9. ALEXIS TIOSECO Film critic

10. JACK SIKAT Singer/Songwriter of the Ethnic Faces

11. NONOY MARCELO

Cartoonist

12. LEAN ALEJANDRO

13. MACARIO SAKAY Unofficial former President of the Philippines

14. TEDDY LOCSIN JR.

Journalist

15. WENG WENG 83cm tall martial artist

16. JOSE RIZALNational hero

17. EDDIE GARCIA
Actor

18. YOYOY VILLAME Singer and composer

19. ROBERT JAWORSKI Athlete

20. EDGAR JOPSON Labor leader and activist

21. LETTY MAGSANOC Journalist and editor 22. JOSE MACEDA

Ethnomusicologist

23. TADO JIMENEZ

24. OLIVIA MEDINA Model

25. BEA VALDESDesigner

26. ARMI MILLAREMusician and composer

27. LUCY TORRES-GOMEZCongresswoman

28. BEN CHAN
Entrepreneur
29. TRICKIE LOPA

Art curator

30. KATARINA RODRIGUEZ
This month's Woman We Love
31. ROXLEE

Godfather of Filmmakers
32. GILDA CORDEROFERNANDO

Writer
33. ROMEO LEE

Artist

34. HOWIE SEVERINO

Broadcast journalist

35. GLORIA DIAZBeauty queen

36. AL DIMALANTASongwriter of punk band
Dead Ends

37. RINGO STARRDrummer of The Beatles

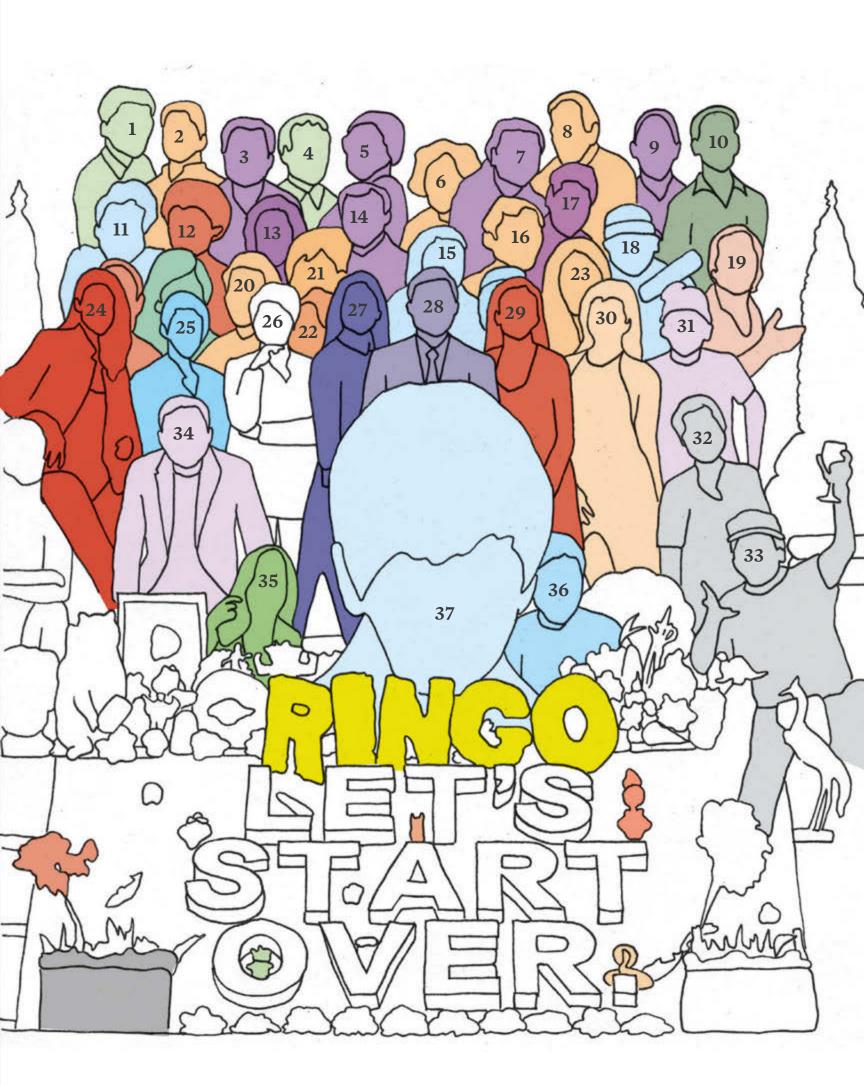
Bob Dylan. The boxer Sonny Liston was a wild card—he had refused to meet them personally and though he watched a Beatles concert that year in 1964, he came out saying his dog drummed better than Ringo. The life-size cardboard cutouts represented a fictional audience who had just watched the fictional Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band perform at a park and had their photo taken with them, a precursor to the superselfie.

When it came to deciding on Esquire's list, a similar tactic was employed. Who are the people we like? Who makes the Philippines interesting? Who are our heroes, underground or otherwise? Who were the individuals that would make this once-groundbreaking but often copied piece of art relevant to us today? Among those who were hand-painted by Louie were Sultan Kudarat, Jose Rizal, Cory Aguino, Robert Jaworski, Juan Flavier, Leandro Locsin. Those invited to join the shoot in person were designer Bea Valdes, musician Armi Millare, literary icon Gilda Cordero-Fernando, broadcast journalist Howie Severino, retail magnate Ben Chan, art fair engineer Trickie Lopa, model Olivia Medina, brothers Romeo Lee and Roxlee, both punks and artists, VJ Katarina Rodriguez, and Congresswoman Lucy Torres-Gomez.

A giant airbrushed head of Ringo, all puppy-dog eyes and pout, took center stage, surrounded by the weird and wonderful artifacts one finds in the Cubao studio where this was shot-bulols, Louie Cordero monster sculptures, taxidermy, and a cameo by Jesus Christ (in Beatles' lore, Lennon was said to have wanted JC in the shoot but was probably crucified for the suggestion since he had just recently made the claim that the band was "bigger than Jesus," a comment destined to offend the easily offended). All the elements were in place, forming a rich tapestry of highbrow and pop, past and present, living and dead. If Ringo fails to act upon this meta-postcard from the Philippines, it wouldn't be for lack of trying, and it ultimately doesn't matter, because the achievements this one image collectively represents are breathtaking on its own. The Beatles may or may not forgive us, but we've certainly moved on.

The Friday afternoon shoot transitioned into a Friday night party in Jeremy Guiab's warehouse studio that in another decade would be described as psychedelic. Caliph8 was on the decks laying down some mindbending music, stuffed endangered species dangled from the ceiling while live birds roamed free on the ground (the less exotic of them were destined for the BBQ-and they were delicious, nothing beats freerange, art-fed chickens), and you had Gilda and Louie posing together for a "The Corderos" photo (no relation), John Lloyd Cruz playing DJ because he can't be on the cover for a fourth time, and fun guests popping by like Moira Lang, Isa Lorenzo and Rach Rillo, MM Yu and Poklong Anading. Not one chair was alike and the toilet at the back of the lot was the stuff of every girl's nightmares, how could this not be the ultimate Esquire party? Ringo, you would feel right at home.

swimsuit by Sundae, wearsundae.com. On Bea Valdes: Blouse ropped jacket by Bagasao and ball skirt by Jun Escario. On Ben Lee: Shirt (worn around waist) by American Eagle. 3. Makeup by Muriel Vega Pe Vlivia Medina: Band jacket (st 9rs by Paul Smith. On Lucy Tr 9ns, and hat by American Ea z. Clothes: On Olivia M. : Top and trousers by P x Lee: T-shirt, jeans, and edina, Katarina Rodriguez, Trickie Lopa, Bea Valdes). Styling Assistants: Mika Reyes, Jaime Abella, and Mika iso (Katarina Rodriguez). Hair by Mayve Torralba Canamo, Jeff de Guzman, and Jasper Dela Cruz. Howie Severinc. Sport jacket and Tshir by Paul Smith and jeans by American Eagle. On Armi Millare: I Lopa: Fringe vest by Fric Padeo Santos. On Retarina Rodriguez: Sequin gown by Banggo Niu. On Rox II. and Mike Is On Howie Olivia Medina, rickie Lopa), Jeff de Guzman (Armi Millare), trousers by Derek Lam (both model's own) tie, and pocket square by Paul Smith. On T \exists Styling by











IN LATE 1991,

A LONG-SILENCED FREQUENCY REKINDLED ON PHILIPPINE TELEVISION SETS WITH THE PLAINTIVE CHANT, "LOVE, LOVE ME DO. I'LL ALWAYS BE TRUE. YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU. SO PLEASE."

The Associated Broadcasting Company, once the crown jewel of Philippine television, had started to broadcast once more, 19 years after its operations were shut down by President Ferdinand Marcos as he declared martial law. The dictator was afraid of the free press, of the Roces family that had owned not just ABC-5, but also the Manila Times. Marcos was ousted and now dead, so the station was now free to plead to the public once more, "...love me do."

The Beatles starred in the test broadcasts that ran for months on ABC-5 before its regular operations rebooted in February 1992. Cable television barely existed then. For loungers of every age who were not fans of Sesame Street or the weekday soaps, the hour-long Beatles reel that had newly-invaded the TV space was the ideal afternoon distraction. Chronology dictated that The Black-and-White Beatles of Ed Sullivan fame lead the show: they with haircuts that only barely transgressed the ears, they with the sappy lyrics and simple but infectious beats, when the syncopations were steady. These were the Beatles, in now ghostly black-and-white, at whom the teenagers (also now blackand-white ghosts) screamed at, perhaps the most famous moments of hysteria ever captured on video. Roll over Beethoven, but the Tchaikovskys would have been only barely threatened. Then the televised discography roughens. In "I Want to Be Your Man", Ringo suddenly, finally, sings. It is a primal growl. The reel itself at this point abruptly shifts from the clean lines of early videotape into grainy film, filmed guerilla style, the close-ups less available. As we enter the Revolver era, the Beatles are in color but the hues are dark, moody. Beards emerge, and soon enough, we see the luscious locks of the Maharishi. It then ends, at the rooftop of the Apple headquarters at 3 Saville Row, just before the band defenestrates. We learn of a place called Tucson, Arizona, where one could not score California grass. They warn us, Get back. Get back to where you once belonged.

Beatles alis diyan! They most certainly would have been cursed at—Beatles, puta ang mga ina ninyo!—but newspapers would not have printed the curse words. Think of the children, you see. That's most certainly what Imelda Marcos would have thought, standing in the Music Room of Malacañang Palace with her children (Irene, Imee, and Bongbong) and 400 of the would-be-luckiest children of Manila, waiting for 11:15 a.m. to arrive on that Fourth of July morning in 1966. The Beatles turned Godot; dictators have no patience for the absurd. Why won't they think of the children?

OF THE BEGINNING, OF THE BEGINNING

British invaders in the Philippines have been eccentric footnotes. In 1762, 450 soldiers of the 79th Regiment of Foot were roused from their idle sleep in India and instructed to invade Manila in line with the Seven Years' War then being waged by the Kingdom of Great Britain against the Kingdom of Spain. The British Army was supplemented

by around 2,000 Indian Sepoys. Manila was seized with relative ease, yet within a few years, the British army had voluntarily slunk away, but many of the Sepoys chose to retreat instead into Cainta, where they raised families. Unlike in many other British colonies, no vestiges of English culture were imprinted on the Philippines; teatime remains the exclusive preserve of The Peninsula Manila (established 1976). But in London, before the adventure had gone sour, the public was enjoined to support the Manila expedition with a song to the tune of the patriotic ballad, "The Roast Beef of Old England", with lyrics that now began: Let's away to Manila, the pride of Old Spain/ Where with gold silk and diamonds great plenty doth reign.

On May 13, 1922, the British battlecruiser HMS Renown sailed into Manila Bay escorted by two destroyers. The Americans by now were occupying Manila, and Governor-General Leonard Wood made sure that the highest military honors, including a 21-gun salute, would greet His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, the heir to the British crown. Thousands lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the would-be head of the English Anglican Church; the fences that held back the waiting crowds staked out at F.B. Harrison Street nearly collapsed. The New York Times reported then that the future King Edward VII was "the first heir to the throne of a world power to visit the Philippines." Within hours after arriving, at the playing fields of the Manila Polo Club (then situated in Pasay), the Prince of Wales was the victim of violence. A wooden polo ball whacked by Captain Rutherford L. Hammond of the American Ninth Cavalry had struck the Prince right over the right eyebrow, leaving an inch and a half gash. His Royal Highness's white breeches were stained with blood, his head rested in the lap of a commoner—a journalist—as the physician dressed the wound at the scene. As he left the polo grounds, the Prince of Wales waved to the crowd, remarking, "I certainly enjoyed the periods I played." Upon the doctor's advice, the Prince had to decline attendance at the reception staged in his honor at Malacañang Palace. Still, the women of society swooned.

King Edward VII's great flaw was not the lack of romantic discipline that cost him his crown, it was his friendship with and admiration for Adolf Hitler. "It would be a tragic thing for the world if Hitler was overthrown," he told a journalist in 1941, as the Lutwaffe was raining bombs over populated British cities. John Lennon himself claimed (falsely) that he was born during one such air raid in Liverpool on the night of October 9, 1940. Paul McCartney's parents, Jim and Mary, first met while stranded together in a basement shelter during an air raid.

The war also had the most profound impact on a hotshot lawyer and acquitted assassin named Ferdinand Marcos. While the actual war records of Marcos have since been clouded with reasonable doubt, his reputation as a war hero enabled a political career that led to his presidency. Marcos's successful presidential campaign in 1965 was attributed in large part to the charm of his wife. Imelda Marcos was



the singing sensation of 1965, dropping a tune without hesitation at campaign rallies. The biggest hit of her repertoire was a 27-year-old *kundiman* called "Dahil Sa Iyo," a song already so embedded in the national consciousness, Nat King Cole was obliged to try his hand at it in his 1961 concert at the Araneta Coliseum. Hitmakers of a certain generation were more eager to please their foreign hosts.

YOU'RE WORKING FOR NO ONE BUT ME

Brian Epstein was the son of Liverpudlian furniture storeowners who soon bought the music store next door. From that less-than-lofty perch as director of the Whitechapel branch North End Road Music Store (NEMS), he became acquainted with a little-known band that regularly performed at the nearby Cavern Club. The four-man band (John, Paul, George, and Pete Best) called themselves The Beatles, a name that had earned them derision during their recent gigs in Hamburg as it had sounded like "Peedles," German for a small boy's penis. Epstein became the band's manager, fired Pete, hired Ringo, and secured them a contract with EMI's Parlophone label. RADA-trained, Epstein convinced the lads to eschew leather jackets and jeans in favor of suits, and to bow at the end of their performances. There is no doubting though that Epstein's hustle resulted in the madness of Beatlemania, and the corresponding fame and riches that enabled them to live in comfort for the rest of their lives. (Pete Best, in contrast, would spend 20 years as an officer at an employment office in Liverpool but would eventually come to perform in Manila as "the original drummer" on September 11, 2010.) When John, Paul, George and Ringo were awarded by the Queen the Order of the British Empire in 1965, entitling them to be known as "MBE," George remarked that MBE actually stood for "Mister Brian Epstein".

Epstein also booked their gigs, and the schedule he put them through was brutal—208 live shows in the year 1963 alone. He arranged the famous appearance in New York at the Ed Sullivan show, then the most popular variety show on American TV, on the condition that the Beatles receive top billing even if they were not yet well-known in the United States. Yet Epstein's undeniable skills at event

management did not extend to financial management. He signed unwise contracts unvetted by lawyers that resulted in McCartney and Lennon losing ownership of their most famous songs. The Beatles were also incurring massive tax liabilities—the applicable tax rate then for super-earners such as the band was as high as 98 percent. When the

From the Free Press, July 16, 1966: Yeh yeh was the rapturous cry when they arrived; go go was the angry jeer when they departed.

second Beatles film, *Help!*, was produced in 1965, a location shoot was scheduled at the Bahamas, where a tax shelter company was formed by the Beatles and the film's producers. The scheme was designed to divert the income earned from the movie away from British income taxation and into the hands of the shell company, which was named Cavalcade Productions.

Curiously, the Philippine company that was able to entice The Beatles to come to the Philippines in 1966 was also called Cavalcade—Cavalcade International Inc. to be exact. The face of the local Cavalcade was Ramon Ramos, Jr., the owner of a fertilizer business. A year earlier, Cavalcade was able to bring the American crooner Matt Monro to perform before over 26,000 people at the Araneta Coliseum. The opening acts at the Matt Monro concert were the xylophone-playing Panlaqui Brothers, and Pilita Corrales. Cavalcade International had also produced the Manila concert of the Dave Clark Five, that other British boy band that also appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964. The plan had been to stage the Beatles concert at the Araneta, but the deal fell through over Cavalcade's insistence on charging as high as 50 pesos a ticket. Instead, the venue that was selected was the Rizal Memorial Football Stadium, which, during the war, had been occupied by the Japanese as a prison camp.

The man with whom Cavalcade International dealt with was Vic Lewis, the great-grandson of a banjo player with the Ethiopian Harmonists, which was big in Liverpool in the 1840s. Lewis had been a jazz guitarist whose big band had been killed off by the arrival of rock and roll, then a talent agent who represented Andy Williams in Great Britain. His agency had been bought out by Epstein's NEMS, to which he was named to the board of directors. He now was responsible as the advance man for the Beatles' foreign tours, travelling ahead of the band to oversee



administrative arrangements. It was Lewis who wrote the contract that Cavalcade International had to sign. It stipulated that all income taxes connected to the tour would be borne by Cavalcade International.

The Beatles in Manila was to be at the tail end of a two-country Asian tour, the last-ever live performances the Fab Four would ever give outside of North America. First, The Beatles would perform in Tokyo, at the Nippon Budokan arena. There were spots of trouble during the Tokyo tour: a typhoon interfered, some right-wingers protested, but the Beatles professed to have enjoyed their time in Japan. After the debacle in Manila, a Philippine newspaper claimed that John Lennon had said, "I wish Japan had taken over Manila during the war."

JUST LET ME HEAR THAT ROCK AND ROLL MUSIC

HELP!, the Beatles parody of the in-vogue spy film, was screening in Manila theaters on July 3, 1966, the day the Beatles arrived. James

Bond progenies such as Dean Martin in *The Silencers*, James Coburn in *Our Man Flint*, Tony Ferrer as Agent X-44 in *Sabotage*, and Dolphy in *Dressed to Kill* were in competition as well. Bond, Beatles, Elvis... All were cultural invaders whose arrogant swaggers were wholly alien to the *kundiman-sa-kabukiran* that had predominated just a decade earlier. The conservative, pastoral vision of the Philippines, swathed in hushed Amorsolo hues, was cast by the elders as the norm to aspire to, the roots to return to after the mopheads of Villasis were done experimenting with decadence. The day before The Beatles arrived, Imelda Marcos was serenaded with a traditional *harana* at her hometown in Tolosa, Leyte, by residents bearing bamboo torches, singing traditional Waray folk songs; she responded in kind singing another Visayan folk song, "Ang Iroy Nga Tuna" ("My Motherland"). The scene would not have been out of place in a Doña Sisang LVN extravaganza.

Still, the kids were excited, and the adults knew it, feared it. The



From the Sunday Times Magazine, July 17, 1966: When he wasn't being obnoxious, Lennon was being insane. Manila police was placed on red alert. At least 2,000 security forces were assigned to protect the Beatles upon arrival. The security preparations for the arrival rites were said to be unprecedented in the history of Manila. Bigger than General Douglas MacArthur, when the doddering old soldier held his

kiss-before-dying tour in 1961. Bigger even than Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower, when that other general became the first ever incumbent American president to visit the Philippines (Ike had actually lived in the Philippines from 1935 to 1939.)

The government security coordinator, Col. Querubin Mabugat, professed nonchalance. "I don't think there is really any difference [with MacArthur and Eisenhower]. Only this time, we'll be confronted with so many teenagers." The itinerary for that first day called for John, Paul, George, and Ringo to be greeted at the tarmac by a bevy of beauties offering leis (later scrapped), then a ceremony wherein

Manila Mayor Yeba Villegas would hand to the Beatles the keys to the city (also later scrapped), then a motorcade to the Philippine Navy Headquarters, where they would give a press conference. The Beatles would then be whisked away onto a yacht harbored off Manila Bay. The yacht, called *Marima*, was owned by one of the country's leading industrialists, Don Manolo Elizalde. In the 1920s, young Don Manolo had been better known as "Lizz" Elizalde, the clarinet player for the popular London jazz band led by his brother Fred Elizalde.

The security was nowhere as forbearing for the more prestigious foreign visitor also then in Manila, United States Secretary of State Dean Rusk, who arrived the day before the Beatles. The Manila Times columnist Joe Guevarra quipped, "Arrivals: Saturday, hairless Dean Rusk; Sunday, hirsute Beatles." Rusk was of course scheduled to meet with President Marcos at Malacañang, the day before the Marcoses thought the Beatles themselves would pay them homage at the Palace. During their two-hour long talk, Rusk and Marcos discussed the pressing

issue of the day: the Vietnam War, which was killing untold thousands of American and Vietnamese youths even younger than John, Paul, George, and Ringo. Rusk pressed Marcos to sign a bill, which committed 2,000 Filipino engineers and security forces into the Indochinese quagmire. Rusk assured Marcos, as he and his government had assured and would assure for years to come, that the United States had the upper hand in the Vietnam War and victory was imminent—after that, maybe let's give peace a chance.

Also in Manila, the day the Beatles arrived, was the aged James Farley, Chairman of the Board of the Coca-Cola Export Corporation. Back in 1932, he was the campaign manager of the successful presidential campaign of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who unlike past Republican presidents, was prepared to grant independence to the Philippines. Doubtless, he would have been irked to learn that it was Pepsi that was sponsoring The Beatles in Manila. Farley, too, had his own schedule to meet with Marcos at Malacañang.

There was one more dignitary in Manila who arrived the same day as the Beatles. Erwin Griswold, Dean of Harvard Law School since 1946, was perhaps the most dominant American legal academic of his time. The staunch civil libertarian was scheduled to lecture at the University of the Philippines Law Center on "Personal Rights Before the Law," on the night The Beatles were heaved out of Manila.

DO YOU, DON'T YOU WANT ME TO LOVE YOU

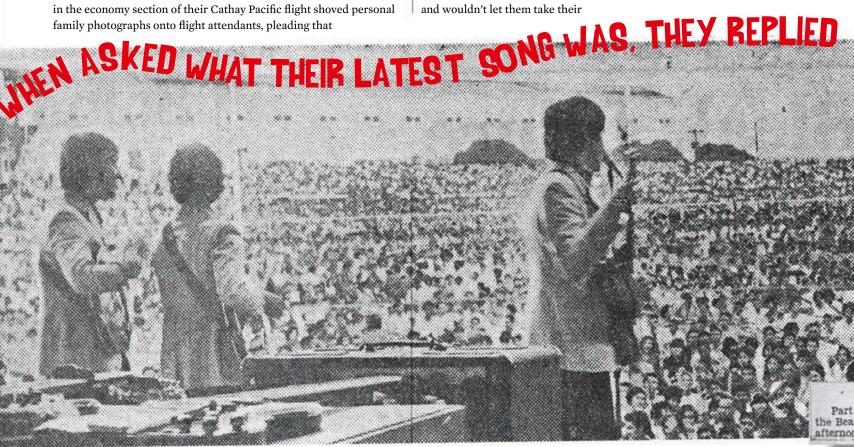
As they landed in Manila on July 3, 1966, The Beatles were existentially exhausted. The first Beatles film, A Hard Day's Night, had parodied the mania of Beatlemania, but offered no explicit clue that the boys were tired of it all, were tiring even of each other. Still, they remained trusting in the belief that Brian knew what was best for them. They signed the contracts Brian handed to them without reading a word. They assumed Brian knew what was going on. There was no need for them to review their Manila itinerary during the flight. They just wanted to smoke their joints, wanted to be left alone. Passengers in the economy section of their Cathay Pacific flight shoved personal family photographs onto flight attendants, pleading that

they be forwarded to the Beatles for autographs. None were signed. The flight captain invited the band into the cockpit. They said no.

None of the Beatles knew what exactly was supposed to happen when they landed in Manila. George assumed that the usual routine would ensue. The Beatles would deplane with their personal luggage and their entourage, then board a car that would take them straight to the gig. In turn, thousands of young fans milling by the Manila International Airport were hoping to catch a glimpse of their motorcaded idols (as had happened before with Mac and Ike and the Prince of Wales). For a moment, at the gate of the Manila International Airport, the teenage mob was able to accost the limo bearing the Beatles. The fans kissed the car, but it sped off. There was no twisting and shouting along the streets for the fans that day.

The Beatles, too, would be disappointed. George recounted, "When we got to Manila, a fellow was screaming at us, 'Leave those bags there! Get in the car!' We were being bullied for the first time. It wasn't respectful. Everywhere else—America, Sweden, Germany, wherever—even though there was a mania, there was always a lot of respect because we were famous showbiz personalities. But in Manila it was a very negative vibe from the moment we got off the plane, so we were a bit frightened."

The fellow who had screamed at the Beatles to leave their bags was the Collector of Customs of the Manila International Airport, Atty. Salvador Mascardo. He had himself driven onto the runway to demand that the bags be handed over, swearing at the Fab Four, "You'll go back to the plane if you don't surrender those things!" That the band members were separated from their personal luggage was especially distressing. They had marijuana in those bags. They were in an unknown country, uncertain about the drug laws and the will in enforcing these. The hundreds of security forces watching over The Beatles took on a sinister aura. As the band's road manager (and future Apple president) Neil Aspinall later described the arrival scene, it could have very well been that The Beatles were being arrested: "The army was there and also some thugs in short-sleeved shirts over their trousers and they all had guns. You could see the bulges. These guys got the four Beatles and stuck them in a limo and drove off and wouldn't let them take their



briefcases with them. They left them on the runway and those little briefcases had the marijuana in them. So while the confusion was going on I put them in the boot of the limo that I was going in and said: "Take me to wherever you've taken the Beatles."

This was the first time in the Beatlemania era that the boys were all alone in a foreign country, cut off from both Neil Aspinall and Brian Epstein. Still uncertain about their friends or their bags or their fates, The Beatles were whisked to their press conference at the Philippine Navy headquarters. Only navy bands are supposed to hold press conferences at navy headquarters. Despite the circumstances, The Beatles tried to charm at the press conference. As the photographers stood up to take their photos, John yelped "Woof!," Ringo pranced and shouted, "Shall we dance!". Only Paul was not hiding behind sunglasses. They insisted, "[W]e're not hiding from our fans. They're hidden from us."

The Beatles, through publicity man Tony Barrow, had imposed rules that would allow for a professional press conference, as opposed to a fan convention. No autographs allowed. No one under 18 allowed, except maybe The Beatles fan club chapter secretary. No standing room. A high-quality sound amplification system so that every word uttered by the lads could be understood. These rules notwithstanding, the press conference that followed was predictably insipid. The absence of any shared contexts between the lads from Liverpool and the habitués of the National Press Club ensured that. Many of the questions were clearly formulated by grumpy old men. Would you be as popular without your long hair? When did you last get a haircut? How much tax do you pay? How do you solve the Vietnam War? To that last question, George earned laughs by drolly replying, Give it back to whoever deserves it. Yet it was clear that the boys were testy. When asked what their latest song was, they replied "Philippine Blues." Few laughed. John had just published his second book, titled A Spaniard in the Works. A reporter asked, What do you mean by Spaniard in your latest book? John asked back, "Have you read it?" then barked, "Then read it," after the reporter confessed that she had not. Jean Pope of the Manila Times said: "John Lennon peered over his arrogant nose at the crowd." Joe Quirino, the Ed Sullivan of the Philippines, liked Ringo

PHLIPPINE BLUES

BIG CROWD AT BEATLES SHOW

from behind the stage at the Rizal Memorial football field. It was the first of two performances by the Liverpool quartette in Manila yesterday.

most of all. "He gave serious answers and was respectful. But his taste of clothes is atrocious. He wore a maroon jacket with white stripes, foulard shirt and pants, and shoes that defy description."

Epstein now stood at the sidelines. He, according to one Filipino, "always looked pissed off." He cut the proceedings short after 30 minutes with a curt announcement, "Gentlemen, that's all." They then proceeded to the harbor, to board the Elizalde yacht, *Marima*, which then pressed on towards the sea.

IT'S ALL TOO MUCH

There is a distinct gap between how The Beatles and their team remember the Marima, and how it was reported at that time. The version recounted by Quijano de Manila (i.e. Nick Joaquin) for the Philippine Free Press narrates a slow-burning but sedate affair, with The Beatles being served Scotch and Cokes, a consommé, fried chicken, filet mignon with mashed potatoes, carrots and sweet peas. The only other persons authorized on board apart from the crew were two children of Don Manolo, and beauty queen Josine Pardo de Tavera Loinaz. The Marima was to be the floating hotel for The Beatles, far from the madding crowds as seen in A Hard Day's Night. The boys remained relaxed throughout, playing tapes of Indian classical music. They remained nonplussed even after a group of 18 young people, Elizaldes and friends, had boarded the yacht without authorization and stayed for some moments. The party pooper, according to this version, was Brian Epstein. He was unrelentingly cranky, to the point that even the lads were twitting him about it. Soon, he demanded that they be let off the boat and into an actual hotel. The boys themselves remained nice, George even telling Josine, "We want to come back to visit when this craze has died down and we're not famous any more."

Later accounts from the surviving Beatles depict their time on the *Marima* as closer to a hostage situation. George Harrison recounted, decades later, that upon boarding the yacht, they were placed in this room. "It was really humid, Mosquito City, and we were all sweating and frightened... [N]ot only that, but we had a whole row of cops with guns lining the deck around this cabin that we were in. We were really gloomy, very brought down by the whole thing. We wished we hadn't come."

In his memoirs, publicist and Manila entourage member Tony Barrow explained that advance man Vic Lewis and promoter Ramon Ramos had arranged that the Beatles and their immediate aides would use the Marima as their hotel during their Manila stay. Decoy rooms were reserved at the Manila Hotel to throw off the fans. The deception utterly failed. Weeks before the arrival, the Manila Times already reported that the Beatles would be staying at a yacht. Nonetheless, Barrow recounts that the boys were pleased at first with the idea of prolonged isolation, moreso after they confirmed from Neil Aspinall that their weed had not been confiscated. But they sweltered in the heat, they chafed at the gun-toting cops on the deck, then they learned that they and their team would be offloaded along the coast only shortly before The Beatles' first show the following afternoon. They needed more time to prepare their suits, their instruments, and they soon agreed with Epstein, who had been sulking the whole time on the yacht, that they needed to leave.

The uninvited arrival of the Elizalde friends onto the yacht would have likely spooked the Beatles. During their first U.S. tour in 1964, The Beatles made the mistake of attending an official function at the British Embassy in Washington D.C. As they entered, the diplomats and their guests went berserk, squealing and pushing. Elderly besot-

ted females grabbed at the boys, demanding their autographs. One lady even managed to use a pair of nail scissors to snip a lock of hair from Ringo's head. After that mishap, Epstein declared it official policy: the Beatles were no longer to attend any official government functions, whether hosted by kings or dictators.

In less hysterical times, November of 1963, the Beatles did agree to appear at the Royal Variety Performance, a yearly gala concert attended by the British Royal family. The Queen's mother and sister (Princess Margaret) were the guests of honor that year. They performed before a well-heeled audience not given to the usual hysterics; this was the one live performance where they did not have to compete with the screams of the crowd. The concert is famous for one moment: right before the final number ("Twist and Shout"), Lennon begs the indulgence of the audience. "I'd like to ask your help. Could the people in the cheaper seats clap your hands," he begins. "And the rest of you, if you just rattle your jewelry." As soon as he says this, John affects an impish grin as he ducks to avoid the jewelry that could have been thrown at him. The cameras pan to the Queen Mother, who lifts her hand and nods, to tell the crowd, yes you may do so. The Beatles are most intriguing, she would conclude. Her daughter, Princess Margaret, chose to clap her hands instead of rattling her jewelry; the other daughter who stayed away has musical tastes, it is said, that lean towards 1950s Broadway hits.

"We're not staying one minute longer on this bloody boat," Brian Epstein screamed at Vic Lewis after managing to get hold of a ship-to-shore phone. "There's absolutely nothing to do and we do not want to spend any more time on this ghastly little yacht!" They were shuttled back to the Manila Hotel, where the whole team occupied a suite and six adjoining rooms. John, George, and Ringo remained in their suite; Paul reportedly got into a car and drove along the Escolta district, then the financial center of Manila.

IF YOU WON'T SEE ME, YOU WON'T SEE ME

Had The Beatles remained on the *Marima* as planned, they would have been less positioned to decline the invitation to appear at the Malacañang Music Room at 10 in the morning, July the Fourth, 1966.

Imelda would say, "To tell you the truth, I don't know too much about the Beatles." (Joe Guevarra: "It seems she prefers her music long-hair but soft.") "Beatle music is too fast for me," said she who would, nearly fifty years later, be the subject of a disco musical about her life. There is no doubting though the cultural cachet a photo-op with The Beatles would have had for the Marcoses. For all their professions of cultural conservatism, they were keen on being seen as with the times. Besides, their children were fans enough, as were the children of countless political allies, palace courtiers, and others on whom favors needed to be dispensed. Why have your children stalk the streets or even sweat it out at Rizal Stadium to see The Beatles? Of course they'll come. They may even favor us with a song or two at the Music Room. Be sure to be there, 11 a.m.

Ramon Ramos, Jr. would later claim that while The Beatles were in Tokyo, he sent them a cable advising that the Palace was inviting them to a reception on the morning of July 4th, at 11 in the morning. The reply to the cable allegedly came two days later, the day the Beatles arrived. The Beatles were willing to attend, if the reception were to be rescheduled at four in the afternoon, right before their first show at the Rizal Stadium. Considering that the Beatles had left the yacht because of their concerns over the lack of preparation time before the concert, the alleged response claimed by Ramos, Jr. is implausible.

Peter Brown, personal assistant to both Brown and Epstein, reported in his own Beatles' biography that their publicity man, Tony Barrow,







First Family

waits in vain

for mopheads

Yeah-yellers here July 4

for 2 shows

The Beatles are coming! Yeah, yeah, yeah.

The long-haired exponents of Beatle music are rriving in Manila for two performances at the Rizal Football Stadium on

The four Liverpudlians John Lennon, Paul Mc-Cartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr-, who set the world's young and old jumping to the Mersey beat and helped reverse England had not be beautiful to be be beautiful to be beautiful to

and the United Press ational issued releas-the suub for readers

AFP's lead: "The performed to a of 80,000 at the Rizal n here Monday night t a great doubt that on Manila's heart." lacasing Palace boy-the performance ...

inywhere before in travels-they snub-he First Lady and ee Marcos children, and Jr. (Bong-Imee, and Irene, duled to call at 11 yesterday morn-Malacanang, the s did not show up spi Mrs. Imelda her three child-a crowd of 400, all of the First Fami-

appointment had anged on request hich brought the for two perform-sterday afternoon night at the Rizal

at Malacafiang. No cable reply came but

Misunderstanding

understanding. Ramos Jr. said he cabled

Ramos Jr. said he cabled the Beatles in Tokyo three days ago to inform them that his company had been able to secure for the mop-pets an appointment with Mrs. Marcos for 11 o'clock yesterday morning. The appointment included lunch at Maleadana.

By Mannel Salak been made for their 11 a call at Malacanang. I did anybody think of questing Malacanang it, The three emphasized there was no deliberate attempt to stand up the First Lady. They said the flasco waz due to a misthe Beatles had prefer duled at 3 p.m.

Stubborn manage

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The Beatles will be sup a host of local

ing and lack of make the call at Malaca-n between the fiang at 3'clock yesterday

had probably received the Ramos cable while in Tokyo, but it was unclear if the news had actually reached Epstein. Ramos claimed that at the press conference, he had reminded Epstein of the invitation to Malacañang. However, as he had done so many times on July 3, 1966, Epstein said no to another request from a Filipino.

> Epstein would later claim, "The first we knew of the hundreds of children waiting to meet The Beatles at the palace was when we watched television earlier this evening [of July 4]." But earlier that day, by eight in the morning, two police colonels, accompanied by Ramos, knocked at the hotel room of Vic Lewis, demanding to know what time the Beatles would be arriving at Malacañang. Lewis, perhaps as the advance man the one person in the Beatles team most likely to have known about the invitation, claimed he knew nothing about the affair. He told the aides to bother Epstein, who was having breakfast at the Manila Hotel coffee shop together with personal assistant, Peter Brown. What time are the Beatles arriving at the Palace, Epstein was asked. As with Lewis, Epstein claimed this was the first he had heard about the invitation. He likewise was prepared with his answer, No. The boys were asleep; the boys were tired. They needed their rest, especially after having gone onto that stupid yacht. Besides, The Beatles do not do official functions.

> Epstein went up to his room, but the armed aides would not leave. The phone rang for Brian. It was John Addis, CMG, Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Philippines. The Ambassador suggested it was not a good idea for the Beatles to skip the luncheon. The Philippines was not the right country to stand on ceremony about an invitation. It was best not to insult them. Brian stood his ground. No. In the meantime, more officers had arrived, from the Constabulary, from the Manila Police District, and even a captain from the Presidential Guard. The son of Secretary of Commerce Marcelo Balatbat waited with them. They left at noon, without The Beatles.

> Some accounts claimed that The Beatles themselves had not known about the invitation until after the concerts. Yet in the 1990s, Paul would recount that all of them were awake that morning, in their hotel room. They heard the police colonels banging on their door, shouting, "They will come!" George would remember that someone had come into their room, saying "Come on! You're supposed to be at the palace." A television set was turned on. "There it was, live from the palace. There was a huge line of people either side of the long marble corridor with kids in their best clothing and the TV commentator saying: And they're still not here yet. The Beatles are supposed to be here." Paul later said he had thought that they had already declined the offer. "It's our day off." They turned the television off. Later that day, Ramon Ramos told the Manila Times that he had talked to The Beatles at their hotel suite, that The Beatles wanted to go to the Palace, but that Brian Epstein said no.

Vic Lewis claimed he had advised Epstein to reconsider. "Don't forget, we are in a foreign country and they seem hot-headed over here." Epstein replied, "I'm not thinking about it." The manager later said that even if they had actually received the invitation, The Beatles would have turned it down. "I would much rather the boys met 300 children in India than 300 kids who just happen to be at a palace because their parents know someone."

THAT THE POLICE RETURNED VIC LEWIS TO THE The guests that had gathered at Malacañang beginning at ten o'clock that morning comprised not just the children, but also their parents, who were friends of the Marcoses. For some of them, this was their first time to catch up with the Marcoses since they had moved into the Palace seven months earlier. The Blue Ladies, Imelda's ladies-in-waiting, were all there. Mrs. and Mrs. Richard Johnson of the Singer Company were there; they were prepared to gift the Beatles with hair dryers and souvenir electric guitars. Imelda had her own giveaways, brochures that explained the integrated social welfare program for the Philippines that she had developed. As the crowd milled

around, the President walked in for a peep. He was told the guests of honor had not arrived; he walked back into his study.

The children had first been told that a mob of fans had besieged the Manila harbor, trapping The Beatles at their yacht. They kept vigil for the next two to four hours; a normal length for most Filipinos, except for those not accustomed to waiting. By noon, the Palace servants started to clear the tables reserved for the Fab Four. One unusually precocious little girl was quoted as saying, "How can a knight of the Queen not keep his word?" Eight-year-old Bongbong Marcos was S, 1966 quoted as saying, "I'd like to pounce on the Beatles and cut off their hair! Don't anybody dare me to do anything, because I'll do it, just to see how game the Beatles are." The

Before The Beatles did start running for their lives, they first had two shows to perform.

from the Beatles, and it's Run for Your Life."

most ominous quotes were attributed by the Daily Mirror

to five-year old Irene Marcos. "There is only one song I like

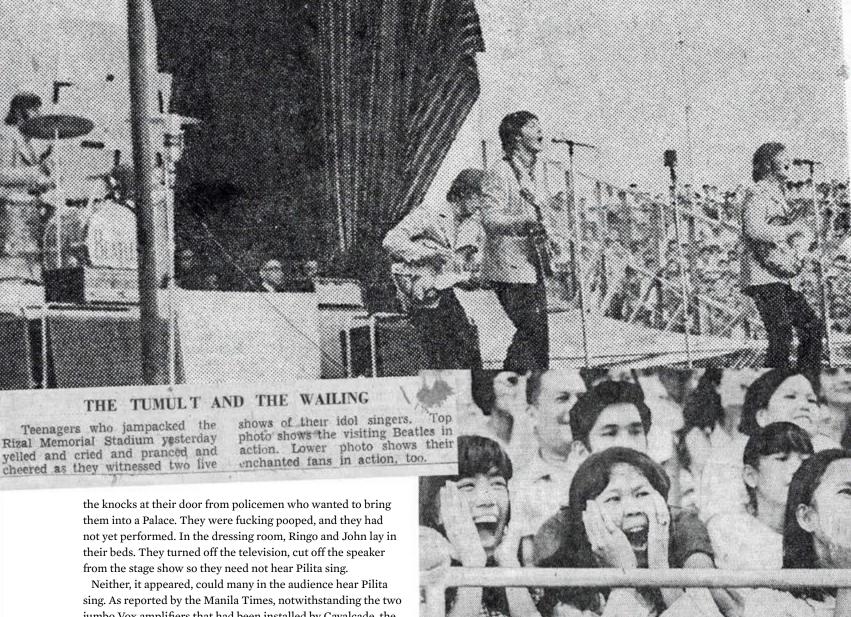
IT'S GOT A BACK BEAT YOU CAN'T LOSE IT

The Beatles had agreed to do a 4 p.m. matinee and an 8 p.m. evening show. By 2:30 p.m., traffic at M. Adriatico Street leading to the Rizal Stadium was at a standstill. Over seven hundred fifty policemen were stationed in and around the stadium. A custom-built, air-conditioned dressing room right on the football field awaited The Beatles. Outside, around 35,000 fans sweltered under the afternoon sun.

There were seven opening acts that were scheduled to perform ahead of the Beatles. Rock band Eddie Reyes and D'Downbeats with D'Cavalcade Dancers (Pepe Smith was a member of D'Downbeats, not D'Cavalcade Dancers). Crooner Dale Adriatico. Singers Angie Yoingco and Nikki Ross, better known then as Wing Duo. Pilita Corrales, already hailed then as "Asia's Queen of Song." The Lemons Three, joined by Pilita. And finally, the Reycards Duet (Rey Ramirez and Carding Castro), winners of a 1953 Quiapo singing contest who soon lived the American dream as established performers on the Las Vegas strip. The opening acts were, Nick Joaquin pointed out, "a rehash, number for number, song for song, gag for gag, performer for performer, of the first part of the recent Peter and Gordon show, which many in the audience must have seen." It was a lineup that could have been lifted from the Clover Theater, where the dying gasps of bodabil were airing out. Pilita Corrales was then only 26, but her signature song, the ballad A Million Thanks To You, had the sound and smell of the world before the war. It could have very well been sung by Vera Lynn as the bombs were falling over London, as the mums and dads of John, Paul, George, and Ringo were fornicating. The teens in the audience may have been struck listless, but their adult minders who tagged along would have gotten their money's worth.

The Beatles arrived in two limousines after the matinee had started, as Dale Adriatico was on. There were way more people present than they had expected, and that did not please them at first. George remembered, "When we got there, it was like the Monterey Pop Festival. There were about 200,000 people on the site and we were thinking, 'Well, the promoter is probably making a bit on the side out of this." Within the last 24 hours, they had been inanity of the press come yacht, the exodus to the note A HOTEL. HE WAS NOW IN

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Neither, it appeared, could many in the audience hear Pilita sing. As reported by the Manila Times, notwithstanding the two jumbo Vox amplifiers that had been installed by Cavalcade, the vocals emitted by the speakers drifted around the open-air stadium, drowned out by the occasional screams of fans and hopia hawkers. Adjustments had to be made to the sound system in time for the second show.

Paul and George were curious about the crowds; they peeked at the audience as The Reycards were performing. George asked if the show was being televised. Paul asked why the people were laughing at The Reycards. It was explained to him that the Reycards were a comedy-and-song act, not unlike the music hall entertainments of their youth. One need only look at Carding's face in order to laugh. Paul was not intrigued enough to go out in front to look at Carding's face.

An intermission lay between The Reycards and The Beatles. The boys dressed in the attire Brian Epstein had chosen for them: black trousers, lavender printed shirts with wide collars, and lavender coats with red stripes. They started tuning their guitars while still inside the dressing room. They went onstage and waited for the curtains to part. Behind the scene, Paul started to dance the twist, and the stagehands laughed.

The Beatles performed only for 30 minutes in the matinee, and another 30 minutes in the evening show. They led with a Chuck Berry cover, "Rock and Roll Music." One of their most popular early hits, "I Wanna Be Your Man," was featured. Curiously, nothing from their most current studio album then, *Rubber Soul*. (A month after the Manila concert, *Revolver* was released.) The set list was replete with singles they had released in the two years prior: "If I Needed Someone," "Baby's In Black," "Day Tripper," "I Feel Fine."

Their current hit single, "Paperback Writer," was ninth in the set list, and there were only ten songs. *Oh baby I'm down/ I'm really down, down, down.* Knockout. No encores.

Joe Quirino fawned over Ringo, claiming that he was the most spirited of the performers. Paul had been the most applauded, with every shrug greeted by screams. John though, and George too, "performed lackadaisically."

MOTHER SUPERIOR, JUMP THE GUN

At least 80,000 people paid to see The Beatles perform live in Manila on July 4, 1966.

Tony Barrow had been bothered by what he had seen during the first show. Uniformed security guards with hefty wooden batons would beat at the kids watching from behind the fences, striking at their knuckles for no sensible reason. The kids were already behind a fence; how could they pose any danger? He returned to the Manila Hotel before the second show began, and turned on the television. Imelda Marcos was on TV, and she was not happy. She announced: "The children have all the time in the world, but we are busy people." Barrow, the publicity man, realized they had fucked up. He called the Roces-owned TV-5, the television station which had been granted exclusive rights to produce The Beatles in Manila, a half-hour summary of the tour that was to air

for three consecutive nights at

10:30, right before the Chiquito sitcom *Gorio and* His Jeepney. Yes, the TV station was ready to broadcast an official statement from The Beatles. Barrow wrote the statement, then he and Epstein rushed over to the TV-5 studios so that the statement as read by Epstein could be recorded. Their efforts were in vain; as the statement was being broadcast later that night, the audio mysteriously disappeared. Brian could not sing.

Barrow remembered that even as The Beatles left the Rizal Stadium at the end of their evening show, miasma already loomed. Their police escort had vanished, and the stadium gates were locked. "This left our stationary limousines at the mercy of organized troublemakers, scores I would say rather than dozens, pressing menacingly against our windows, rocking the vehicles to and fro and yelling insults at The Beatles which none of us could understand." They were able to eventually escape back to the Manila Hotel. In the dead of night, the police came. They invited Vic Lewis to come with them. He was interrogated at the police station. "You represent The Beatles. Why did you not bring them to the palace." At some point that night, Lewis and Ramon Ramos, Jr. appeared at the Press Office in Malacañang. They emphasized that this was not a deliberate snub, not an act of rebellion, but a simple misunderstanding. Lewis allowed Ramos to blame Epstein. He himself hinted at the Manila Times that Epstein was annoyed and angry over the whole trip. Epstein was upset about the seizure of the luggage. Epstein was mad that contrary to instructions, there was standing room at the press conference. Epstein was livid over the lack of privacy at the yacht, and the arrival of the 18 Elizalde friends. All these incidents, Lewis said, "compounded Epstein's annoyance and wearied down The Beatles."

It was just before daybreak, July 5, 1966, that the police returned Vic Lewis to the Manila Hotel. He was now in fear that The Beatles' lives were in danger.

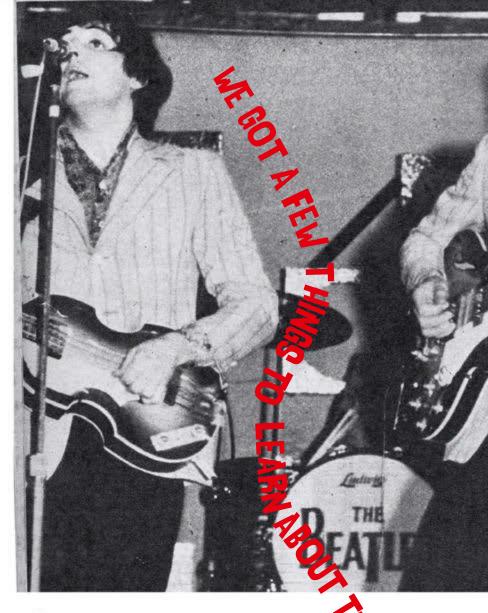
FOR GETTING IN YOUR WAY, WHILE YOU TRY TO STEAL THE DAY

"BEATLES HELD FOR TAXES: BIR detains rich mopheads", screamed the front page of the Daily Mirror on July 5, 1966. Revenue Commissioner Misael P. Vera warned that The Beatles would not be allowed to leave at 3:30 p.m., as scheduled, "unless they pay the income tax they realized from their performance yesterday." The income tax liability was estimated at P22,000.

At eight in the morning, a representative of the Bureau of Internal Revenue arrived at the Manila Hotel, bearing an envelope for Brian Epstein. The bill was said to be for \$80,000.00. Vic Lewis, who had negotiated the contract with Cavalcade International, was dispatched to explain matters to the taxman. He explained that under the contract and all contracts between The Beatles and local promoters, it was always the local promoter who would shoulder all income taxes connected with the tour, whoever is assessing it. Vic Lewis failed to convince. He called Epstein and suggested that they leave the country pronto. Epstein agreed. He just needed to wait for the share from the gate receipts from Cavalcade International. No one from Cavalcade International arrived with an envelope for Brian Epstein.

The boys were awake. They ordered breakfast from room service. When no trays of food arrived, they sent their road manager Malcolm Evans, to see what was holding breakfast. There was not a Manila Hotel employee in sight when Evans arrived at the lobby. When finally someone appeared at the front desk, he gruffly announced that there was no more room service for the Beatles.

The popular television host Bobby Ng ("Jam Session") had been doing a front-page multi-part series on The Beatles in Manila for the front pages of The Manila Times. That morning, he was ushered into



Suite 402 of the Manila Hotel for an impromptu interview with Epstein, George and Paul, who sat atop the television set. Paul unsurprisingly played the nice guy. "We don't want to offend anyone, especially since we're visiting in this country. We just want to sing." George was more sullen. "We didn't even want to come here."

Paul asked if in the Philippines, the government controlled the press. Ng replied that the press was free, but the public was indignant. Paul pointed at the local papers lying in disarray. "The newspapers say, 'Snub, Snub!' then they say... [McCartney whispered] Oh... misunderstanding!"

The morning before, as John, George, and Ringo slept after arriving from the yacht, Paul had explored Manila. He saw the homeless sleeping on the streets just across the toniest office buildings. He took photos of what he had seen. Now, Paul started on social inequality in the Philippines, and how the people were exploited by the few with wealth, with power, with yachts and palaces. He was interrupted by Ng, who said that perhaps the people would not be so angry with them had they agreed instead to move the meeting at the Palace at another hour. Paul was upset. "We weren't supposed to be there in the first place. What were we going to do? Show up and say, 'We're here! Sorry we're late!' Why should we apologize for something that's not our fault?" After Paul insisted that they had not asked for that appointment ("How would you feel if you were told what to do?"), Ng replied that the invitation from the First Lady "amounted to an invitation from one who represented all the people."

John Lennon walked into the room. "We got a few things to learn about the Philippines," he told Ng. "First of all is how to get out of here."



BABY, I'M DETERMINED AND I'D RATHER SEE YOU DEAD

There remained a throng of die-hard fans waiting at a cool distance near the Manila Hotel. They would have no doubt jumped at the chance to help The Beatles unload their 60 pieces of luggage from their suites and load them into their cars. The hotel bellhops and porters had vanished. Barrow hailed the driver of the baggage truck as "the last adult in Manila loyal to our cause." Epstein was concerned that their plane, the New Delhi-bound KLM Flight 862, would be forced to depart without them. He called the KLM office and asked to speak directly to the pilot by skyphone. He pleaded with the pilot not to leave them stranded in the Philippines. The pilot promised he would wait as long as he could.

John described the ominous ride to Manila International Airport: "All along the route to the airport, there were people waving at us, but I could also see a few old men who were booing us. There was a group of monkeys, you can't call them anything else, waiting for us as we were to fly out of the country." The old men had always been against them. During their first American tour in 1964, the reviews they received from the Sinatra generation were brutish. The talk show host David Susskind called them: "The most repulsive group of men I've ever seen." The right-wing icon William F. Buckley said: "Not merely awful, but so unbelievably horrible, so appallingly unmusical... that they qualify as the crowned heads of anti-music."

In the Daily Mirror, Airport General Manager Guillermo Jurado said that there would be no special security arrangements for The

TO GETOUT OF HERE. what they deserve," warned the airport

Beatles. "They will get

From The Sunday Times Magazine July 17, 1966: Very few heard the Beatles sing. The blaring instruments drowned our the trio of voices.

manager, like a godfather announcing that the once-favored son no longer had his protection. When the Beatles arrived at the airport, the escalators had been turned off. The group was slowed down as they lugged their equipment. Several teenaged fans were present to send off their idols,

but they were overshadowed and over-shouted by a mob of an indeterminate number of non-fans. "Beatles alis diyan, Beatles go home!" the mob shouted. "Nakakahiya kayo!" the fans would scream back, in near tears.

Who comprised this mob of Beatle-haters? D.C. Dayao of the Manila Chronicle, (owned by the family of Marcos's then-Vice President, Fernando Lopez) claimed, "[t]he crowd consisted of youths and elders who happened to be at the airport to see or meet some passengers. There was no previous announcement of the mopheads' departure or the plane they would take." Balderdash. Jean Pope of the Sunday Times Magazine said that the airport mob stood as proof "that the Filipinos worship their First Lady." Gag. Ringo figured that "[t]hey were most probably customs men, because they were all wearing the same clothes and carried guns." Neil Aspinall recalled that the thugs had been wearing Hawaiian shirts; the same sartorial trademark of many a populist Filipino politician. The hundreds of security forces who two days earlier had escorted the Fab Four into Manila were missing, but maybe they still remained on The Beatles detail.

This was the first time The Beatles were inside the Manila International Airport, as they had bypassed the terminal when they arrived two days earlier. Those who wanted to harm The Beatles were stationed at every exit of the customs/immigration area and the quarantine area that every ordinary passenger had to pass through. The mob stalked the entourage at every nook of the airport. Paul remembered, "We got pushed

about from one corner of the lounge to another." Brian Epstein, Vic Lewis, Tony Barrow, Neil Aspinall, Peter Brown and Mal Evans all banded together to protect the boys at all costs. Someone kicked at Epstein, he fell down, his ankle seemingly sprained. He also received a punch in the face. Mal Evans was kicked in the ribs; he was bloodied by the time he got to the plane.

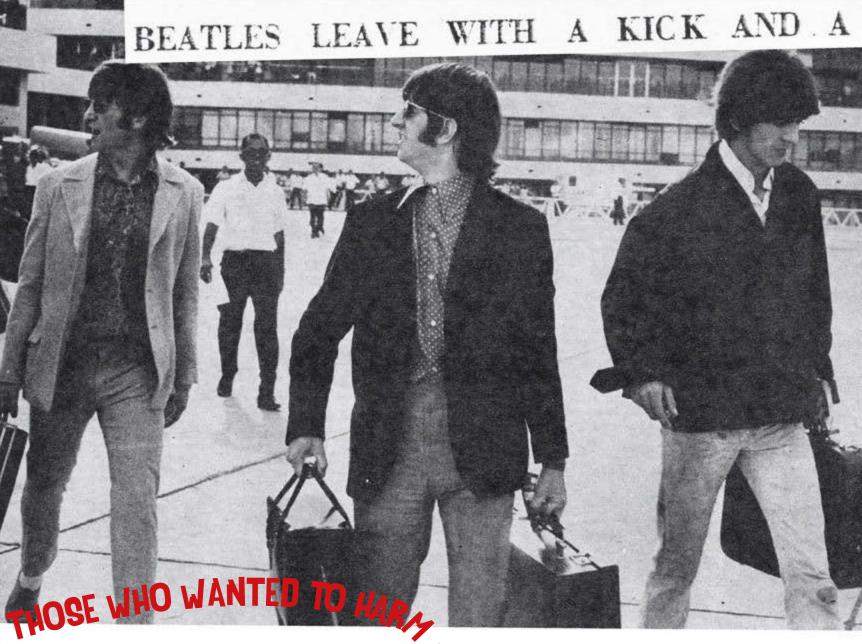
John heard someone in the crowd exclaim that The Beatles were being treated just like any ordinary passenger. He reacted in disbelief. "Ordinary passengers? What? He doesn't get kicked, does he?" D.C. Dayao of the Manila Chronicle reported that Ringo was able to duck a punch, just before he, George, and John made it past the immigration area. Paul had already sprinted ahead of everyone else.

"I'm sure nobody got badly hurt, but that was because we didn't fight back," Neil Aspinall said. "If we had fought back it could have been very bad. It was very, very scary, and nothing like this had ever happened before—and nothing like it has ever happened since."

Vic Lewis said, "I remember running across the tarmac with my hand on my back, thinking that if a bullet hit me, it wouldn't hurt me so much... It looked like a battleground." Seventeen years later, a man did get shot at the tarmac of the Manila International Airport, the political opponent Ferdinand Marcos feared the most.

The group had already boarded the plane and was awaiting their Argo-style escape when an ominous message pierced through the loudspeakers. "Mr. Tony Barrow and Mr. Malcolm Evans must return to the departure building." The publicist and the road manager deplaned, uncertain of their fates. "Tell [my wife] Lil I love her," Evans asked the rest of the group, only maybe in jest. Nine years later, the cops did shoot Malcolm Evans dead, but those were Los Angeles cops and Evans was holding an air rifle when he was shot. He had left Lil by then.

It turned out there was a plausible excuse for holding Barrow and



Evans. Since The Beatles entourage had not gone through the normal immigration procedure when they had arrived, the papers of Barrow and Evans had yet to be processed. Perhaps they could have been detained further if the Marcoses wanted to. By this time though, Benjamin Romualdez was at the airport, deployed to take charge and end the drama. He would later hold court at his own embassy in Washington D.C. as Philippine Ambassador to the United States, but then, he was powerful enough simply as Imelda's brother. Romualdez confronted one of the goons at the airport, telling him to let the Beatles be. He was not listened to, not even after the man was told that he was talking to somebody from Malacañang. "I do not give a heck whoever you are." Then someone told the agitator, "He is Romualdez, the President's brother-in-law." As the Manila Chronicle reported: "A look of awe came over the youth who [slided] away."

They remained unnerved in the plane while waiting for Barrow and Evans to return. Epstein was hurting, bleeding. Vic Lewis came over. Did Brian get their share of the gate receipts? That's nearly 50 percent of the performance fee, you know. Epstein erupted at Lewis. "Is that all you can think of, Vic? Bloody money at a time like this?" Lewis was having none of it from Epstein, all of this was Brian's fault. He may have been the advance man charged with arranging the on-the-ground arrangements, but he believed it was Brian who had screwed up the invitation. He charged at Brian, "I'll fucking kill you!" The others had to separate them. Lewis and Epstein barely spoke to each other again, but within a year, it was Vic who replaced Brian as managing director of NEMS Enterprises. Vic Lewis did get his own "Mister Brian Epstein," honored by Her Royal Highness, The Queen in 2007, two years before his own death at age 89.

The plause. place wou. come zen abo. Marcos," George 1986, after the dictat.

"By did snub [the First.]

"Even then, we had taste.

Brian Epstein started vomitit.

He was feverish, even after they la.

ill in his room at the Intercontinental.

dered at the prospect of another world to.

already booked for the following year. They e
U.S. tour that loomed before them. "We're going
of weeks to recuperate before we go and get beaten

Americans." George said.

The veterans of this Battle of Manila reconfirmed to ea.
other that their general had been at fault. John would conclu.

"That was Brian's cock-up, because he'd had the invitation given to him, and declined it, and never told us." One month
later, it was John's cock-up. The Beatles are more popular

than Jesus Christ! The Daily Mirror did report on the total
boycott on anything Beatles initiated in the province
of Pampanga by the former president of Semana

HIMPER

From The Manila Times, July 6, 1966: The Beatles take a last look at their fans and Manila after a wild rough and

Santa, "a Catholic association member of the local Knights of Columbus." What would have worried The Beatles was the reaction in the heartland of 1960s America, the news breaking just as they were about to embark on their ORDINARY PASSENGER HAD 14-city U.S. tour, with a new set list that

featured songs from their newly-released album, Revolver. The Memphis city council voted to cancel the concerts scheduled for August 19, but having just defied a President, The Beatles could very well defy a city council. At the Memphis concert, someone in the audience threw a lit firecracker. When it exploded, Paul, George, and Ringo turned their heads. They thought John Lennon had been shot.

John later remembered the scene at the Manila airport. "I didn't get kicked. I was very delicate and moved every time they touched me. Well, I think I wasn't kicked! I was petrified!" Many in America were petrified of him as well especially as his activism hardened (the Nixon administration even tried to deport him), yet Middle America continued to consume his music, attempting wistful versions of "Imagine" at karaoke even as they blanched when it came to the line, "and no religion too." Still, the man who shot John Lennon dead was not a government goon or a crazed fundamentalist. Mark David Chapman was simply a Beatlemaniac.

The Beatles had predeceased John by 10 years. After Manila, they would only perform 14 more live shows, all within the span of 17 days in August 1966. There would be no more world tours, excepting their 1968 sojourn to study the ashram of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi at Rishikesh, India. That too was a disaster. Ringo left after 10 days, the others lasted two months. Sexy Sadie was the single born from that experience; Lennon had originally wanted to call the song Maharishi. You made a fool of everyone. In 1984, in a ceremony at Malacañang Palace, followers of the Maharishi declared Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos as the "Founding Father and Mother of the Age of Enlightenment".

In 2003, Ramon Ramos, Jr., now 70, sat down to talk with Philippine Star columnist Quinito Henson and his one-time employee at Cavalcade, Bobby Grimalt, at the Hard Rock Café in Makati. The Beatles were able to escape the Marcoses, the fertilizer stored at his warehouses rotted as the government permits he needed would not be issued. He said that the reason why The Beatles refused to go to Malacañang was because they thought they would be coerced to perform for free; the TV scenes they saw the morning of July 4, 1966 featured a glimpse of a stage, with microphones and amplifiers laid out. He talked about the Marima, and now said that The Beatles had to leave because the yacht had become crowded with fans. Manila Hotel had not wanted to take them in, but acceded after management was assured that the boys would enter through the back door.

The end of The Beatles as live performers came just one month after Manila neutered Brian Epstein. He was a master at staging the live events with camera-friendly angles that generously gave due to all the squealing girls. As the boys retreated into the studio, there was less for him to do, except manage their money, at which he was a disaster. He was openly gay, at a time when buggering was still a criminal act in Britain. He had a problem with drugs, a problem with drink, and a problem with sleeping. He also preferred to lock his bedroom. No one knows what prompted him, just barely a year after the disaster in Manila, to take six sleeping pills after dress-

TOMS IMMIGRATION AREA AND

ss through. ing in his pajamas. The coroner's verdict was accidental overdose, the barbiturates proving lethal in combination with

NOTHING IS REAL AND NOTHING TO GET HUNG ABOUT

alcohol. Brian Epstein was only 32.

The Manila newspapers that had so distressed The Beatles in 1966 had proclaimed themselves part of a storied tradition of press freedom. As Bobby Ng had earnestly explained to Paul, the press merely reflected the anger of the public.

The politicians were certainly upset. Manila Mayor Yeba Villegas, who was supposed to have met them at the airport with the keys to the city, now said that we would have had them arrested for disturbance of the peace if they as much as performed in the streets of Manila. The Governor of Cavite, Alfredo Gimenez, warned that unless the public stopped buying Beatles records, the brats "who have been spoiled by our patronage would forever treat us contemptibly." Marcial F. Samson, a Caloocan councilor who sponsored a successful local board resolution banning the sale and playing of Beatles records in the city, announced that it was time that "these arrogant noisemakers be made to understand that we do not allow nor tolerate anyone whoever he is, to show discourtesy and disrespect to the Presidential family."

The one political dissenter who was quoted as speaking out against the insanity was Senator Ambrosio Padilla, who explained that the municipal bans against Beatles records violated personal rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, and that while the band may have committed a social faux pas in rejecting the Malacañang invitation, "[1]et us not mislead our people by creating the wrong impression that by not visiting Malacañang, the Beatles have violated a law of the land." After martial law was declared in 1972, Padilla was among a small group of Senators who marched to the shuttered Congress in an attempt to reopen the building. Their path was blocked by armed military guards. The offices of the Manila Chronicle had been padlocked the day martial law was imposed; the relationship between Marcos and the family of his former vice-president had soured long after the paper had raised the most fulsome of defenses on behalf of the dignity of the First Lady. On July 6, 1966, Manila Chronicle columnist Ernosto O. Granada had asserted that "a Beatle fan is mentally under-developed". On September 22, 1972, Granada was being hunted by the Philippine Constabulary. The Lopez-owned Channel 3, which produced Bobby Ng's Jam Session, was permanently closed and Ng relocated to Canada where he became the afternoon drivetime DJ for CJVB Vancouver from 1973 to 1977. Channel 5, which had betrayed Brian Epstein by cutting off the audio as he broadcast his explanation for the boys' absence in Malacañang, would remain closed from 1972 until 1991.

Martial law may have been declared only in 1972, but even in 1966, bullies were in control. Reason, rule of law, good taste and even human decency all yielded to the currency of raw power. We had started our flirtation with absolute monarchy. Our representatives in government, our mouthpieces in the media, fawned over the King and Queen and fronted themselves as pawns in defense of the realm against the mop-haired knaves and other imagined enemies. The Beatles may have thought kindly of Eleanor Rigby when they wrote about her plight. Yet we learned that when Eleanor was uncastrated and rich enough to buy her dream world, no one was saved. Imelda Marcos has yet to be buried. When she dies, she will likely lie beside the half-wax effigy of the husband, whom George Harrison unlovingly called a twat. Thousands will endeavor to line her coffins, to say prayers for

her soul and to her grace. Sexy Sadie, what have you done? You made a fool of everyone. 14

Toone Fusion





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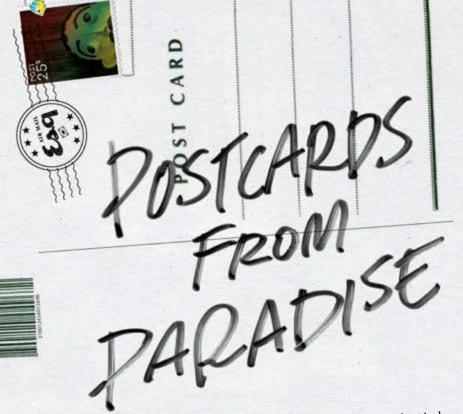
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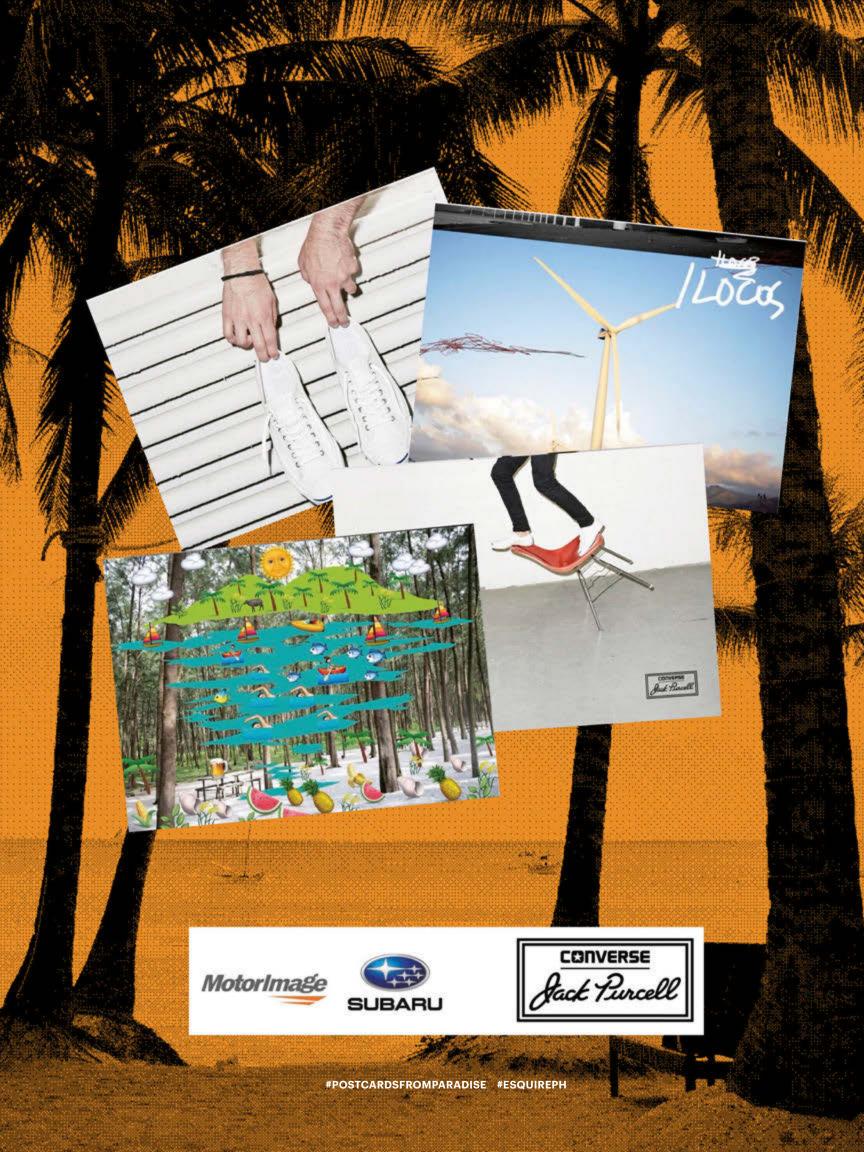
Almost 50 years ago, the Beatles came to the Philippines. Fans packed the Rizal Football Stadium for 30 pesos a stub. But despite the warm welcome from the general public, the band left the country traumatized by the treatment they got after refusing to make a special appearance at the Palace. It is said that they vowed never to return.

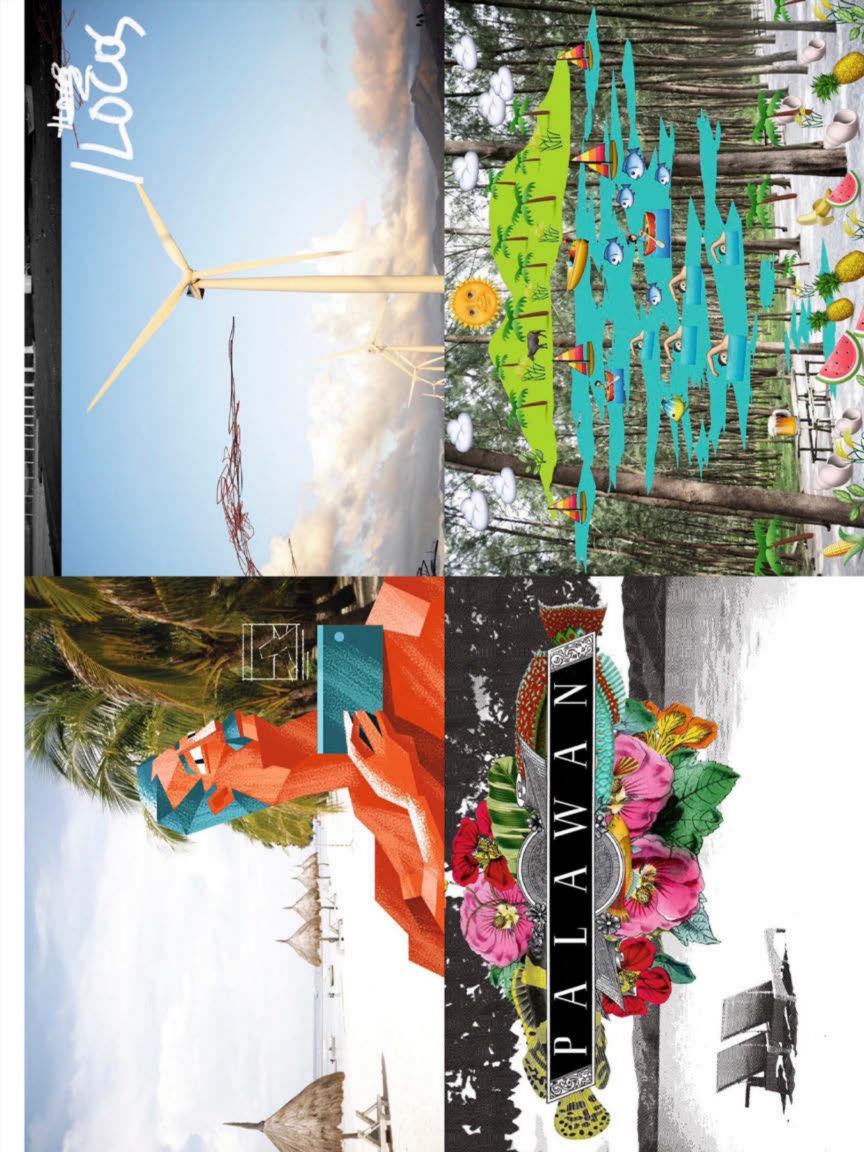
This month, we try to change that first impression. Inspired by Ringo Starr's new album, Postcards from Paradise, we invite you to send a postcard from paradise, and we'd like to believe that there is no better paradise than the Philippines.

Rip out these original Philippine postcards designed by Dan Matutina, Kristine Caguiat, Carina Santos, and Dex Fernandez, and send them to a faraway friend, a long lost love, a travel buddy, or heck, send it to Ringo Starr, in hopes that he will see the beauty of our country and the friendliness of its people. Let's start over!

DON'T WANT TO RIP APART YOUR POSTCARD SET? TAKE A PHOTO OF YOUR POSTCARD INSTEAD AND UPLOAD IT ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

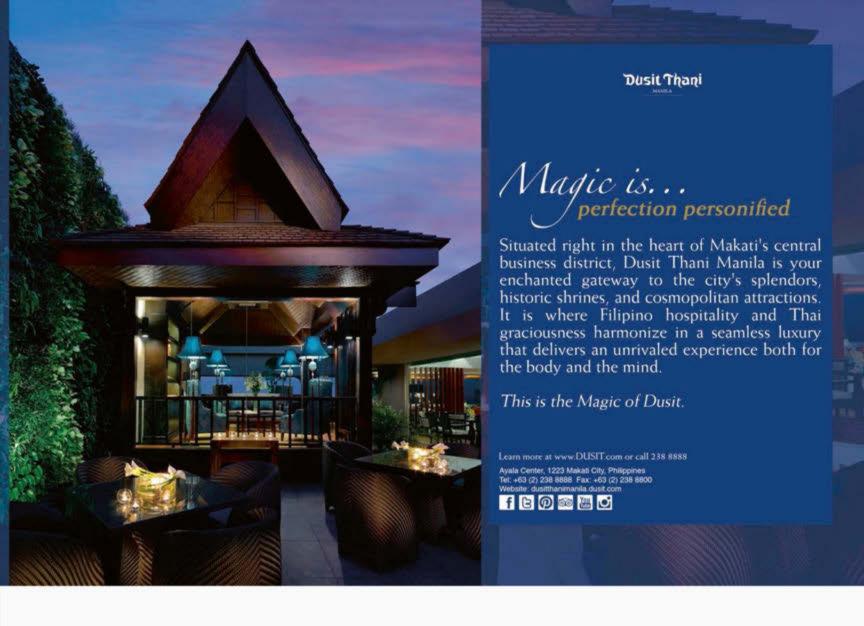
DON'T FORGET TO TAG @ESQUIREPH AND THE PERSON YOU ARE SENDING IT TO.





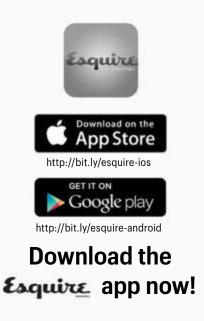






THE SOPHISTICATED MAN'S HANDBOOK TO MATTERS OF SOCIETY, STYLE & CULTURE.





Esquire

UNEXPECTED WAYS AS SHE

CASUALLY SAUNTERS HER WAY TO THE TOP.

WILL TANTALIZE YOU IN

KATARINA RODRIGUEZ

EDRIC CHEN OF AT EAST | JED ROOT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
PH

STYLING TINA ONG PRODUCED BY JONTY CRUZ HAIR AMANDA PADILLA AT EAST I JED ROOT MAKEUP MICHAEL FELICIANO





ATARINA RODRIGUEZ doesn't immediately strike you as your typical runway babe. The MTV VJ remembers being in the waiting room for the auditions of Asia's Next Top Model, glancing nervously at the well-coiffed girls beside her. They were all professional models—tall, skinny, with a confidence amassed through a number of modeling gigs that Katarina herself never had. She was only 20 then, a

student at the De La Salle University with zero background in modeling. While the other girls flaunted their perfectly proportioned bodies, with bones jutting out in all the right places, Katarina had a more athletic build from running track and field since she was 14. She inherited the Filipino features of her mestizo father and tisay mother. She has those Brooke Shields eyebrows and stood below the average height of the towering models that eat go-sees for breakfast. In the end, and much to her sur-

prise, Katarina would not only make it into season two of the show, she would also make it to the top three.

Katarina has an innate talent in translating her unlikely, non-model charisma on camera that is really quite surprising to see. Behind the camera, she seeks mostly to impress you, as opposed to seducing you. She rouses you with an almost virginal allure catching you off-guard with her intelligence. She talks amicably about school and shares her dreams of pursuing a master's degree then a PhD in Economics. She lures you in sweetly. And then she'll get to work, and when she poses, she radiates and titillates with a power that is undeniable—her aura quickly transforming from girl-next-door to vamp.

At the moment, however, Katarina is talking about the inertia of an extended summer vacation. She's itching to be back in the classroom. "I'm taking up business management which, by the way, I think is completely useless. I've learned more being in the modeling industry than I have in



"I LOVE PHILOSOPHY. I THINK IT'S A COURSE EVERYONE SHOULD TAKE," SAYS THE GIRL WHO WROTE A SEVEN-PAGE EXISTENTIALIST PAPER ON THE AWKWARDNESS OF BEING IN AN ELEVATOR.

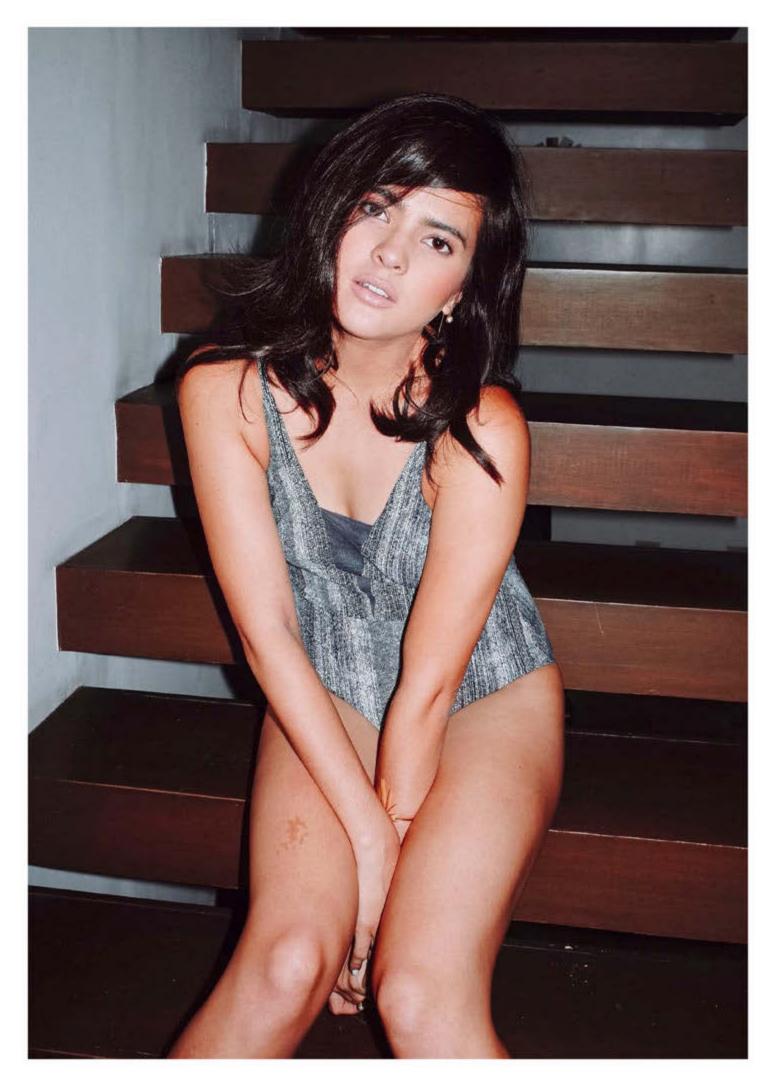
school. And I took philosophy, which I kind of had to fight for, because I love philosophy. I think it's a course everyone should take," says the girl who wrote a seven-page existentialist paper on the awkwardness of being in an elevator.

She remains mostly preoccupied with youthful concerns: graduating, how to be the next It-girl, and boys. "I'm trying to immerse myself in other people's love life problems, because I'm trying to ignore the fact that no one is making me *ligaw*," she says laughing, and for a brief moment, I feel transported into a Teen Vogue interview. But she asserts it's a pressing concern. No one in the 17-40 age range, whom she interacts with day-to-day wants to buy her flowers. "Why doesn't anyone make me *ligaw*? You have no idea how much thought I put into this! I asked everyone, my friends, 'would you make me *ligaw*,' and they would give me this really confused face. And I was thinking, 'am I ugly?' But then, I'm a model!" I think the girl is being ridiculous, but she has come to her own

conclusions herself. "People were telling me, maybe it's because when guys see my [so-called] success, they think, how do I reach that level?" It's true. It's probably Katarina's accomplishments that are slowly turning her suitors away for the sheer fear of being brutally emasculated (pussies).

NATURALLY, a rising bombshell that is being paid to be beautiful and not to mention far from stupid would be kind of intimidating, but Katarina can't see this and it genuinely bothers her. "I don't feel like I have accomplished anything great to threaten people that way. I'm not like, 'I have to be the winner.' It's more like, 'What can these experiences teach me?""

She is wrong with one thing: sooner than later, she will be the accomplished winner. This girl is bound to go places. She's ambitious as hell and not afraid to heat things up. Her beauty is not boring and neither is her attitude, which can bewitch the world without anyone ever expecting it. Not even herself.





Esquire

Forget paradise—Jerome Gomez sheds his fear and most of his clothing for five days on the EDM-soaked island as he goes deep undercover as a Laboracay party boy.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSEPH PASCUAL

#WORKHARDPLAYHARD #WANDERLUST #JETSETLIFE #SUNSETS #TAKEMEBACK #ENDLESSSUMMER

#BLESSED #BORABOD #WALWALSEVER



"There's a festival there, sir. They ca<mark>ll it Laboracay.</mark> Everyone in the Philippines goes the<mark>re."</mark> —hotel assistant at Shangri-la



oracay. Three days before Labor Day weekend.

Didn't plan on spending close to an entire week here but if you book only four short weeks to D-day, you make do with the flight schedule you're dealt. Anyway, I thought it would be nice to ease into the island before the great onslaught. "How many times have you been to Boracay, sir?" one

of three attendants at the tourist registration asked earlier, noting I have skipped the question in the form. I was just here in November for my father's 65th birthday, and then the year before that, in June, a post-celebration for my mother's 63rd. There was a period in the mid-2000s when I visited every chance I could get, said yes to every press junket, feigned interest in every beach volley finals and bikini open, and then forgot to write about them. I counted on Louie Cruz to swing me a room at Pearl of the Pacific when I was broke and couldn't afford respectable accommodations; the erstwhile Manila nightlife arbiter was pursuing his post-Giraffe life in the island by opening a restaurant there and doing hotel PR duties. I've been here more times than I would care to remember, but this visit I am to accomplish a real obligation: to have fun. To cram what would ordinarily be three vacations' worth of intoxicated bacchanalia (is there any other kind?) into five short days, to soak in #laboracay version 2.0, the follow-up to last year's much-celebrated and much-maligned Labor Day weekend that exploded on social media like too much green, slimy algae that refused to be swept offshore. To be carried to bed every night by an entire EDM-crazed mosh pit, or drunkenly crawl home by sunrise after an orgy of drugs and pot while moisturized with other people's fluids. To take as many notes as I can even as I'm tripping on E, pen in one hand, a stranger's water bottle on the other. To show up in the office on Monday with either a black eye or a police record or both. And then to put in writing My Savage Journey to the Heart of The Boracay Dream.

My editor had *Fear and Loathing* in mind clearly, not taking into account that the office had only issued me a per diem of five grand that could barely cover three days of meals and tricycle rides, what more a ball of cocaine. And that I was a 41 year-old gay man who only got high on whiskey and tequila and the occasional weed, with little—which translates to practically no—experience with drugs, and who was in fact scared of them. I had the Fear part down pat, yes (although a tagline in one of the party invites had me biting my nails: "Perhaps The Only Non-EDM Party in The Island," meaning all other parties will be wall-to-wall *tugs-tugs*). The Loathing would have to come by the end of my last night, when I am standing naked on the hotel tub and poetically scrubbing the marinade of other people's grime and sweat and Hawaiian Tropic off my sun-fried skin.

But it's early in the day. The short pathway by the dock is almost

clear of people. On the way to Ilig-Iligan, where the house I'm staying in is located (all of White Beach has been booked solid), it's all bucolic island scenes until we get to the main road where the rattling of tricycle engines seeps into the airconditioned pickup. The house caretaker Dodoy, who is driving, says a rerouting scheme has just been instated the day before, to ease the load of vehicles in the busier areas. Peace resumes as soon as we go up the hilly trails, past Fairways and Blue Water, past the entrance to Shangri-La, past a smattering of homes with *sari-sari* stores in front. Farther and farther away from commercial Boracay, and closer to what it once was. We pass a long stretch of untamed tall grass from both sides of the street fenced in by cement and chicken wire. Everywhere else is the morning sky. The car enters an open gate and I am greeted by a row of gumamelas standing upright like regal swords poking the sun, except their leaves and branches seem parched and barely able to hoist them up. The property, which belongs to the Tirols (Boracay's earliest settlers and once owners of some say practically one third of the island), is perched on top of a hill and is surrounded by a patch of forest. I have an hour before lunch and figure I have time to go down to the beach. I walk the steep incline of raw soil covered in plant debris towards the sand whose creamy whiteness under the morning sun forces my eyes to squint. There's no one around except a couple of local kids playing by the shore. If you look up, you can barely see the house on the hill. All that's here is sky, sand, a rock the size of a mountain that seems to bookend the shore, various plants, and trees that I imagine to be descendants of the first greens the ati tribe planted when this island used to be their home before the colonizers landed. Boracay in all its raw beauty. I take a picture with my camera phone—not of the view but of myself—turning my back to the ocean and faking a laugh. My picture said it all: it's only eleven in the morning and already I'm feeling #Laboracay2015 will be #offthecharts.

The warm breeze of the hills is replaced by oppressive heat almost as soon as I step out of the tricycle and into D'Mall. I'm oozing basketball game sweat so I remove my shirt and walk around looking for lunch, my potbelly forging on and my manboobs bravely jiggling every step of the way like retired Aldeguer Sisters. I decide to go shirtless for the rest of the day, moving in and out of Stations 2 and 3. There's something decadent and ultimately liberating about walking around in public in the bright of day with an exposed paunch, like sticking your tongue out to the gym bunnies inside a Fitness First. Three tongues out if you include my tits. By happy hour, I sit by the bar at Bombom with just my shorts on and watch the world go by in the span of three frozen margaritas. Vendors selling cheap sunglasses pass. Barefoot Europeans. A bunch of young people wielding monopod sticks, oblivious to the foot traffic behind them, concerned only in getting everyone in the group-fie frame. CWL-type seniors, each one a Mardi Gras in herself, in spaghetti tanks, tie-dyed shawls, zebraprint pants, wide-brimmed hats, big shades, and Bazooka bubblegum pink crocs. An Asian couple in his-and-hers shirts; his says "Kim loves





Esquire



How Duchampian. Avant-garde in the middle of this "Island-hopping, sir?" "Scuba-diving, ma'am?" theme park. Welcome to paradise. We don't just suck your shit, we swallow.

Michelle," hers says the same in reverse. Everyone's a family, a group of friends, a couple. They all come with company and nobody needs to make a new connection—even as everyone's trying to catch any kind of attention. "Dress like you're going to meet your future boyfriend," says the sh<mark>irt of a petite island girl. I figure I ne</mark>ed to take off more than my shirt to meet a future anything on this island, or win more than a passing glance, unless they think they can sell me a banana boat ride. I should feel sad but as I get more drunk by the hour a sly smile materializes on my SPF-free face.

"You have to have fun, ok?" the boss texts from Manila. "It's part of the story. If you don't then no one will be reading it."

"My motto is 'Never say no to anything," I reply.

The sound of a marching band seeps into the noise around, its drums thundering louder as it approaches. Curiously, it is led by a guy with a toilet bowl strapped to his torso. How Duchampian, I thought. Avant-garde in the middle of this "Island-hopping, sir?" "Scuba-diving, ma'am?" theme park. Welcome to paradise. We don't just suck your shit, we swallow.

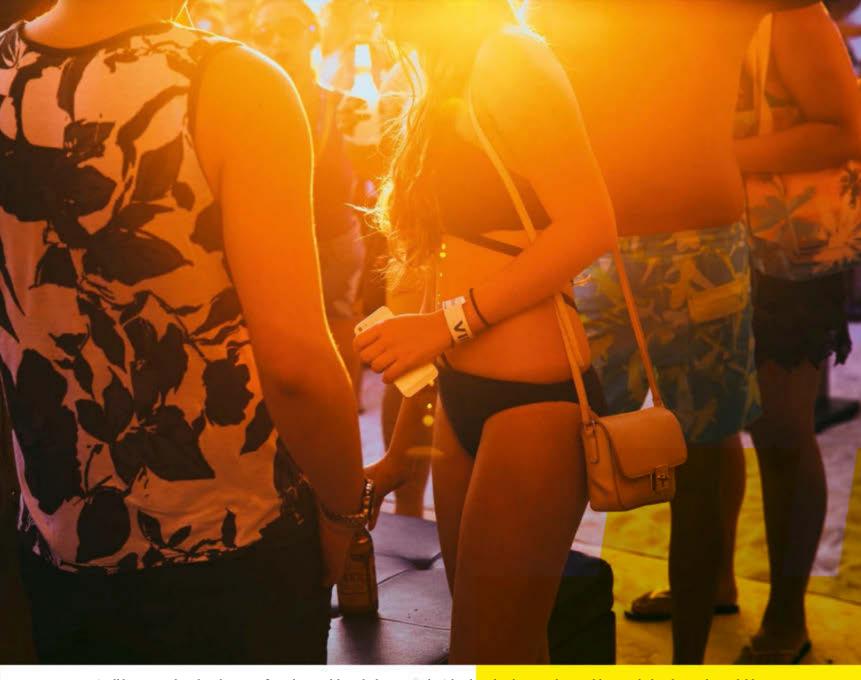
I move to the nearby Exit bar and shift to beer and whiskey. A friend tells me this is a happening place but there's no one here except for the bartenders, and I'm already too drunk to wait for a party. Like

the waitresses in the Mexican joint where I had a bad burrito for lunch, they talk about Mary Jane Veloso's date with the firing squad scheduled in Indonesia the next morning. I text Edwin, Dodoy's brother-in-law who owns a tricycle, to pick me up (we agreed on P200 for every ride), and I walk towards the main street like a happy zombie, passing by the grocery to buy instant coffee, a tumbler of chips and water, shamelessly walking down the

aisles among clothed tourists, occasionally dancing to the piped in music. "You're different when you're here," a friend once told me on the beach at the start of a drunken evening. I catch the attention of the effeminate lad who sat beside me watching cartoons on his iPad in the plane earlier and asked if he's found a place to stay. "Yeah," he says with a contrived smile and a slight Farrah Fawcett head throw. Did he think I was picking him up? I guess I would have, if I planned to end my first night listening to Taylor Swift in bed and doing decoupage.

By 10 p.m. I am back in the house, walking to my room guided only by a white streak coming from Dodoy's lighter. There's a brownout, not a strange occurrence in the island that continuously hums not just with the sound of tricycles but running generators. Not here in the hills, of course. My phone lights up to a Viber message: my first invite to a party. "Putting you on the list for Saturday," the message reads, which means she assumes that after four days of drinking, my liver and Liveraid won't have failed me.

It's Wednesday afternoon and I am at a cabana with a bar in the middle of a lush, manicured garden, sitting across one of the best views in the island. There are too many pictures of Boracay sunsets and not enough of Jove Schrottmann, owner of Mandala Resort and



Spa. He is all boy-next-door handsome at first glance, although the tattoos beneath his arms and the stud on his left ear suggest he is more than your usual sunset snap. He is smart and suave, Switzerlandschooled, an MMA fighter. Son of '80s fashion model Ping Fideris and the German Dieter Schrottmann who moved here in the '70s, built the island's first floating bar and eventually Mandala, the prize-winning resort and spa known for its luxurious massages, located high up in Barangay Manoc-Manoc, far from the White Beach marketplace. Jove took over the business when his father passed away a few years back, expanding the sprawling oasis into a more holistic lifestyle destination, building an entire pavilion for yoga classes, maintaining the standards his old man left behind. Jove resides on the island and spent many of his growing up years here. He's seen it transform from the serene playground of his youth to what it is today. "You could go hiking from here to Puka beach and you could climb over rocks, see birds, turtles, fishes, you'd see life!" Jove recalls. "Now all you see are structures and people."

Lots of people. Close to 90,000 tourists landed on the island's white shores in May alone of last year, a little more than a hundred thousand the month before—which most likely includes Laboracay revelers who reached the island a day or two earlier. Labor Day hotel occupancy shot up, and the beach, in photographs that came out on social media at least, seemed blanketed with bodies.

Boracay has always had a Labor Day weekend crowd, says Jove, but in 2014 there was an effort to throw big parties especially for the occasion, unconsciously giving birth to another event weekend in the island's calendar, one that could outrank the always dependable Christmas season and Holy Week arrivals, and one that attracted a different crowd. Not anymore the students who already blew their allowances during Holy Week, but young urban professionals who moved their client presentations earlier, call center managers who magically reached their quotas in advance, to make it in time for the much-hashtagged merrymaking, ready to blow some cash, wear their Cotton On sandos and swimming pool blue aviators, and party like it's 1999—or at least how they thought people partied in 1999. "I remember walking seeing bottles of Red Horse and plastic cups," recalled Jove of last year's shindigs. "People come here with their baggage and dump their stress on Boracay. You don't go to a friend's house and dump your garbage there." He understands people need to party—he's had his party-'til-you-crawl days himself-but if the debris of all that spirited debauchery hurts the island, then that's where he draws the line. "I'm not gonna tell people how to celebrate life, but celebrate responsibly. Keep it classy, man."

There are better ways of burning my hard-earned money than drinking it away on the beach—or so Jove says, his spa-owner hat gleaming invisibly. "You would probably get more from your time off when you use it to recuperate, relax, reward yourself well instead of going to the beach and partying and coming back a mess again." I'd like to believe him. But then I could never afford the 12k per night villa at Mandala, maybe even the hour and a half massage they invited me to partake of. I was never into massages but I promised myself to never say no. I let myself be led by a masseuse to this gorgeous Balinese-style hut, walk

Labor Day sounds like workers raising their arms in Mendiola asking for the benefits they deserve. This is Valkyrie on a weekend, the pool at The Palace: the yuppie set fistpumping the air for more scotch, more vodka, more champagne, more EDM!

its beautiful wooden floors, and be ushered into an enormous matte-tiled bathroom to change into a purple sari, and consequently lie flat on my stomach with my face caught in a cushy hole while looking at a single patchouli flower in a bowl. It's probably the best massage I've had in the current fiscal year but I really wouldn't know; massages bore me and I'm thinking its already past sunset and I could be having a drink. People like to say there are two kinds of Boracay tourists: those that come here to relax in the arms of nature, and the rest come to dive head first into the day-to-night parties. In truth, however, come sunset, whether you're a downward-dog-posing, tree-hugging wellness addict or Tim Yap, you'll end up itching to be where the crowd's at, which is White Beach.

Which is puzzling, really, I realize as soon as I make my way on foot to its center from Station 3. It's like your entire neighborhood threw a videoke party, and you're the bitch homeowner who didn't approve. Music genres fade into each other almost in a snap—acoustic, OPM ballads, reggae, K-Pop, EDM—from a soloist in basketball shorts, a folksy singer in a bar stool, a band on a makeshift stage, booming speakers flanking a trio of fire dancers, their faces as empty as the now crowd-less beach. No one is particularly watching, or listening, except for a group of elderly Taiwanese who are waving their hands to a Chinese ditty being sung by an Afro-haired *Pinay* chanteuse. Everyone is selling something, or buying, or haggling, for a lobster dinner, a trinket, a souvenir shirt, a choriburger, a cornrow braid. It's like Patpong with sand on your feet and with guts out, but there are no ping pong balls shooting off a woman's privates, or two guys doggie-styling on top of a monkey bar. Still, it's an assault on the senses; a surreal trip if you walk fast. Better experienced drunk or high, no doubt, just to kill the sweet scent of despair wafting about. An obese woman is trying to attract more attention to herself by getting a henna tattoo. People are lining up to have a picture taken with live statues in archangel costumes that look like sand; it's free, the lady who takes the pictures tell me, just donate whatever you can. At an EDM party in Station 2, I see a familiar face scouring the crowd. She's doing PR for a watch brand. "Namimigay kami ng relo sa mga celebrities," she tells me, sounding every bit as classy as a P.A. in Channel 2. Which celebrities, I ask, because I see none. "Kung sino lang makita ko."

"I need an edgier scene," I message my friend, a local, as soon as I settle down at Exit.

"If you mean 'off the tourist traps' I'd say Exit Bar, then Area 51, then on May 2 Pepe Smith is playing at Charlie's Bar. Then on Sunday, sunset sessions in Diniwid Beach. That's the 'local' trail, and if you're hanging with the locals that's where they'd take you."

"How about drugs?"

"What about it? *Siyempre marami* for a party weekend like this but most people bring their own. Otherwise it's just about asking friends you know and see and they would probably know someone selling."

I tell her I just need to be in some sort of hedonistic environment, whether it's a private or public party. With or without drugs. "I just need a little edge, glamour," I reiterate.

"Good luck! LOL!"

I hop onto a motorcycle and ask the driver to bring me to Cocomangas, where people used to outdrink each other with nasty shots—for

the great honor of their name appearing on the bar's walls. I needed to dance to tunes I'm familiar with, before I jump into a plague of EDM beats in the fast approaching weekend. Cocomangas is a bar that hasn't been described as "happening" in quite a while. Going by its dingy interiors, a local DJ who I conveniently assume is a fisherman by day, and the obvious lack of Manila tourists. Which is just as well: less competition for the ladies of the night huddled by the theater-style seats, the better for them to

get noticed by the burly foreigners sitting by the bar. I decide I like the place and make my way to the small rectangular dance floor where there is some serious party going on, mostly local men, with an Asian woman who I suspect is not looking to get jiggy with a man based on her moptop haircut. A longhaired lady in a printed tank and jeggings starts dancing with me, and we strut it out like our families from Tacloban depended on it. Until, like an apparition, a tall Asian man in full *Fear and Loathing* regalia—bucket hat, tinted outsize aviators, and Hawaiian shirt—walks by and I cease to exist. She starts talking to him, starts dancing. He engages her for a while but then he starts to make his way out the door. And that's when she jumps him from the back, wrapping her arms on his shoulders like a skinny crab on a pot coming up for air, holding on for dear life.

wo things I've learned from this trip: Hangovers are only for the working class; there's no such

overs are only for the working class; there's no such thing if you're not clocking in for duty the next day. There's no alcohol binge that a quick swim couldn't wash off, supplemented by an entire day in bed. Come sunset, you're throwing a Frisbee on the beach

or lounging with the "haves" at White House like a social climber in training. Which brings me to my second learning: Your party holiday is only as good as the people you know. For if I didn't have a well-entrenched friend in the Boracay social register who knew Jove, who in turn hooked me up with Aaron Civitarese, resort manager of the White House resort, the *tugs-tugs-tugging* heart of the Labor Day weekend extravaganza, I wouldn't have snagged a white wristband that would get me into the VIP area of the biggest party in the island. I would have been, like most days, watching how the other half embarrasses itself from the unfashionable side of the "have-nots."

Aaron is from Canada, but because he is white he could very well pass for an Elizalde whose family owns the only non-commercial beachfront property down the road—especially when he has his Panama hat on. It's a few hours before his event starts so he cuts straight to what he needs to tell me, which is essentially that he and the establishment he represents are aware of the transgressions of last year's parties. The tourists had the time of their lives but the islanders scoffed at the rubble of glasses and bottles on the shore, the smattering of cigarette butts everywhere, the overall indecency with which many revelers treated the island. White House, being the establishment that threw the biggest party, owned up to the responsibility of making everything right this year: there are 20 or so interns who work in shifts whose only job is to keep the beach trash-free for the four-day event; there's an ambulance waiting on the street, there's a fire truck, there are two generators running all day so that they don't take away from the already drained source that is the Aklan Electric Company. They're being adults, which is the last thing you could say about last year's party crowd if you ask the people who own the island, or those who think they do.

While the Labor Day weekend has been going on for eight years, the Tirols of White House hired Aaron two years ago to pump some real excitement into it. And he did. And here it is now, in front of me: Laboracay in all its youthful, fluorescent glory. Pumping, whistling,

cajoling. Labor Day sounds like workers raising their arms in Mendiola asking for higher wages and better benefits. This is Valkyrie on a weekend, the pool at The Palace: the upwardly mobile professional set fistpumping the air for more scotch, more vodka, more champagne, more EDM! They make for a glorious sight, these men with their sculpted bodies and perfect pompadours, the women in their bikinis gathered around the White House pool. This is spring break, except most everyone's too Chinese to flash their Double Ds. Like in Manila, they dance where they stand. Well, it's really not dancing, more like jumping and raising their hands to the beat (which, if you think about it, are the only moves electronic dance music allows one to make). In between, phone cameras and selfie sticks are raised, maybe a private joke or two exchanged. It's all clean, very heterosexual fun, and it looks magnificent. Welcome to Partying in the 21st Century. There's no glamour of wild abandon here; only a sort of affected merrymaking. It's a performance almost, as if there's a drone circling everyone's every move. At past 10 o'clock, no one seems particularly smashed, except for a burly white guy, the only white person in the house, who I allow to sip from my paper cup—breakable items have been banned at White House, unless you drink straight from a bottle—his shorts almost falling off his ass. We kiss and before I can pull his pants up he disappears into the crowd only to show up minutes later, escorted by bouncers, still unable to walk straight. Two more casualties follow, a girl, and then a guy, both passed out from too much fun and too much alcohol. I train my eyes to the sea of people in front of the stage, on the shore, flinging their arms to the evening sky. They weren't kidding when they said this is the biggest party in the island.

After two drinks, I move further down the beach stretch to Juice Bar. An open air enclave of specialty shops called Plazoleta during the day transforms into an O Bar when late evening strikes, enclosed by a kind of thick translucent plastic, the sort tricyle drivers use for the rain. The tragedy of this design solution sets the tone for the entire

space; there is no effort at décor here. Ricky Toledo and Chito Vijandre and their paisley shirts won't last a minute. I make my way through the standing crowd with the thought that a little dancing would comfort my homosexual soul, but there was no dance floor at the end of the room, not one body making even the slightest gesture that would amount to a dance move. Compared to this place, there's more action at An-

dok's. It's like coming to a wake, except the bar is busy and the music is Beyonce. They're all looking gorgeous, of course, the evening's patrons, these living, breathing pompadoured bobble-heads. Only their heads shift angles, checking out each sister who enters their peripheral visions. Toned and tanned and polished, gleaming under the elusive streaks of light. After all, Laboracay is all they've been waiting for in the past 12 months, putting extra hours at the Gold's Gym circuit area, starving themselves, scouring Zara for the cutest shorts and the cutest shirts that would allow for the highest chance of sideboob exposure. And for what? To stand and chat and check their Grindr while nursing their single bottle of—Holy Mary Mother of Grace Jones—Red Horse Beer? If this is what gaydom has come to, I'm better off abdicating.

Refusing to end my night on a funereal note, I pull together my remaining stock of sobriety and swing by Paraw at Station 1. There's no cover charge asked, no white wristband necessary. Just me and my still shirtless self, whiskeyed out, dead tired and not having fun yet. Instead of the beach entrance, I go straight to the door from the main street and as soon as I step in, the heat of a thousand bodies greets me and I light up like a joint that's stayed too long in the cigarette case. The huge dance floor is packed with people: locals, foreign tourists, and this lovely group in uniform yellow shirts, Manila tourists celebrating the happy state of still being able to raise their hands and gyrate after a long pub crawl. They welcome me into their tiny little circle of love, and we dance like old buddies, skin to sweaty



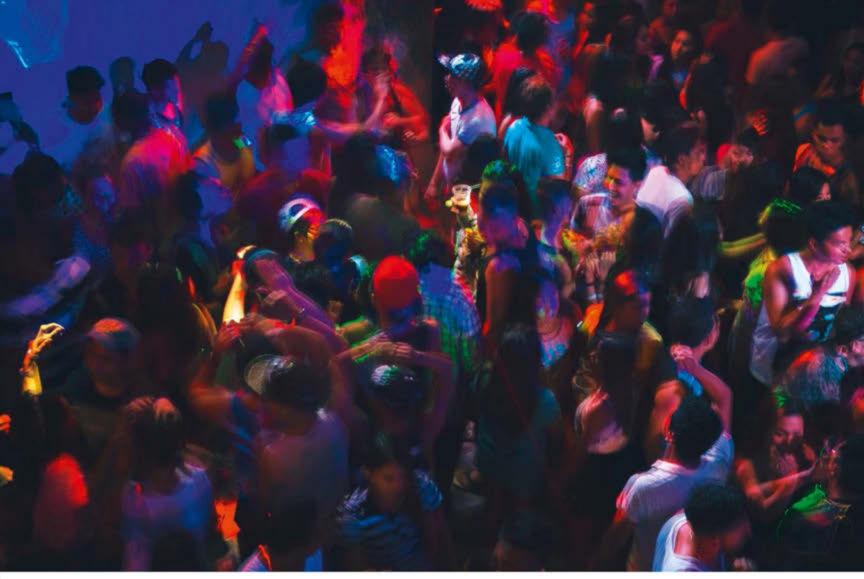
And that's when she jumps at him, wrapping her arms on his shoulders like a skinny crab on a pot coming up for air, holding on for dear life.

skin. I move towards the center of this glorious congregation, helped unknowingly by the wave of the moving throng. As Rihanna nears the last strains of "We Found Love," I tweak my second learning of the trip. In a place like Boracay, you don't have to know anyone if you're not pretending to be someone you're not. There's nothing more liberating than dancing in a club full of strangers and prostitutes.



'm at Two Seasons with David Milan, the wildlife here is stunning," Joseph, the photographer, messages me. Milan is an editor at Philippine Star's weekender Supreme. He's a Boracay regular and an inveterate party animal. "Wildlife," I surmise, refers to the afternoon's set of eye candy. The beach takes a backseat during Laboracay season, nobody talks about it, and if you take into consideration the thousands of people on the island at the moment, hardly anyone ever swims. One leaves

the room to see people, and hopefully be seen. I must admit the message excited me, but I have just moved into the Shangri-La which is 12 hectares of eye candy. The PR has offered to host us for our last two days on the island, with a dinner by the beach with our own butler and chef, and a ride back to Caticlan aboard the resort speedboat. The passing view alone from the street entrance to the lobby is breathtaking, and the grandeur of stepping into its main pavilion is the stuff high-budget AVPs are made of. I was supposed to meet a friend who took the 2GO party boat to the island (EDM music throughout while



he and his friends tripped on Ecstacy), but I decide to lounge for a couple of hours, use the beach and have a caipiroska at the bar by the pool, beside two hefty American women whose only dilemma in life at the moment is not their size but which cocktail to order. I want their life, I think to myself, but Joseph's text is pulling me away from any daydreaming.

The party is in full swing when I descend upon Two Seasons, and Joseph is right. The wildlife is gorgeous; like the weekend Gourmand Fair at BGC but with less clothing. Youth and beauty everywhere you look. If you're not one of them, it almost feels like being bullied. The girls prance about in their bikinis, but it's the men who steal the show. There are more of them, for starters. They're larger and broader and therefore lord it over the scenery. They seem to have carefully considered every strand of their coiffeurs, their hard-earned abs as tense as the air in the room when my father found out I swing for the same team. I wonder how their girlfriends keep up. I wonder if they care. I have yet to meet a woman who looked for abs in a man. They want their men to be nice. They want them to smell good. They want them to have more money. But to have abs? I wonder who these young Adonises are doing it for. Over at the restaurant, the ordinary-looking ones hide their beer bellies under the table, munching on their oyster sisig and having another swig of beer. The next day, Leo DiCaprio's dadbod is all over the Internet, tooting the horns for owners of beer paunches everywhere, validating my resolve that there's nothing more glamorous than the excess and indulgence that love handles stand for.

As soon as the sun's gone, we move to the real party next door, Day 2 of the Sunkissed event at White House. A crowd has started to gather in front of the stage where one of the imported DJs are playing the evening's first set. Milan tells me he'll just say we're all from Esquire so we can gain entrance. I still have the white wristband from last night in my purse so I'm not worried. Milan gets through the bouncers by the lounge, and so does Joseph. When my turn comes, one of the

bouncers looks at me as if I stole his family's only working carabao. I send Aaron, the resort manager, a text message, but I am eventually let in as soon as I put my day-old wristband on. It turns out, however, that there are a couple more bouncers to deal with, the ones minding the elevated V.V.I.P. area that Milan and Joseph have already climbed up to. As the two guys worry about how they can manage to save me from succumbing into this social death, a yellow wristband materializes, the wristband of wristbands straight out, I presume, from Ronald Singson's pocket. Finally, they let the short, shirtless fag with a gumption as big as his paunch through. I approach Singson, the refined and handsome son of Chavit, and introduce myself. He is the man behind the Sunkissed party series. We chat for a bit and he tells me his vision is to make Boracay the party capital of the country, or the EDM capital; it's hard to tell with all the noise. The table in front of me, whose party I'm supposed to be with, is composed of photographers and social media darlings, among them BJ Pascual, the blogger Laureen Uy, and the gorgeous En Estrada. From the cordoned off area on the sand, a glamorously intoxicated Divine Lee waves hello, although I'm not quite sure to who, and maybe she's not quite sure, either. I don't know how it began but everyone starts to make everyone drink from the available bottles on the table: vodka, whiskey, tequila, pushing each bottle to various mouths, spilling a lot of precious alcohol in the process. Laughter ensues with each forced gulp and pictures are taken. At one point, En snatches the camera from Joseph's hands and starts snapping away. This rigodon of drinking and picture-taking goes on for like half an hour but even as I continue squeezing myself into their circle, none of the bottles go my way, and when I finally get myself into a group photo, trying to stick my head out in the back row, a guy with his arm around my neck suddenly looks at me with a dazed expression on his face, as if it's the Tatler Ball and he just saw Susan Enriquez.

Joseph doesn't do well with alcohol, so before he gets smashed from



all the drinking and lets go of his steady hand, we decide to check the action at Station 2. From the main street, we pass by the unpaved narrow path where we chance upon a small group of men in a drinking session in front of a sari-sari store. Already a bit drunk from the Hennessy I've been consuming, I say hey to the guys from behind the chicken wire fence. They say hello and invite us to join their little shindig, these three men who may or may not still be in their workwear basketball jerseys and slippers—it's hard to tell when your workplace is the beach. This is what some of the locals do during heavy party season in the island; they have their separate gatherings, quietly huddling under coconut trees (at least in the few portions of the shore where the resort waiters don't shoo them away), their knapsacks opening to reveal bottles of Tanduay and packs of Jack & Jill, unwinding through a quick catch-up with friends and a few minutes of soaking on the beach. We sit on short wooden stools and take in the glasses of Gold Eagle beer we are handed. We talk about what they do and what we do, and eventually I ask how they feel about Laboracay. "Wala namang problema 'yan," the more forthcoming of the three replies, his arms folded on his bare chest. "Hindi naman dapat sisihin 'yung mga nagpa-party. Party lang 'yan. Pagkatapos nila, may bago uling dadating." The

real concern, says the much older guy, the one the other two jokingly address as SP02, is that it's more the big businesses that should be blamed, and the systems that allow these corporations to do what they do: the people who import sand and cement into the island, for example, the giant establishments that only care about the money gained from the deluge of tourists but couldn't care less about the distress the y're causing the ecosystem. Not in those words, of course, but you get it. We buy them another bottle of Gold Eagle Mucho as a gesture of goodwill as we prepare to leave. There's very little chance we will ever get together again, but like proper guests trying to, as Jove says, keep it classy, we thought it only decent to replace the alcohol we consumed. Besides, Joseph says this was probably the most real thing we've ever gotten ourselves into in the past few days. For me, it was my chance to finally talk to a local who I don't have to order food from. As we say our goodbyes we learn that the trio all belong to one family, which we find out when their matriarch arrives, a lovely fiftysomething lady named Inday, born and raised here, who owns the series of apartments behind us. Nothing about her appears particularly concerned about the parties and establishments getting bigger and bigger as her island gets smaller. All is right with her as long as the family is together. I ask Joseph to snap a souvenir group picture, and unlike at the White House VVIP section, I find myself at the center of the frame. We depart from the congregation more drunk than when we started, but feeling as fulfilled as middle class people who just donated their kid's old toys to charity.

At Exit, a party finally materializes. It's a mostly white crowd and I join the few dancing bodies on the sand-covered floor near the DJ playing Motown. Nicole, a white girl in a short sundress, her hair

The wildlife is gorgeous. Youth and beauty everywhere you look. If you're not one of them, it almost feels like being bullied.



tied up in a disheveled bun, starts aggressively dancing with me, putting her arms around my neck, making jerk-off gestures in front of my crotch, gagging my mouth with her palm. I feel a bit violated but only because she's a woman. I let her do what she does and get on with the dancing. After she leaves, I soak in the freedom of the place, its invisible open arms, the absence of selfie sticks and the fact that I'm no longer in a room that feels like a Slimmer's World contest.



verybody goes to Laboracay, and this Sunday night, my last on the island, there's a big probability they're all here at Epic. Except for a friend who gave me two hits

of weed and got wasted too early. For a while I was battling with myself whether like him I would stay in for the night or give this holiday one last giant push and get back out there. I wanted more, suck the marrow and remaining flesh out of this dogbone-shaped island. Like the thousands of people who made it to this pilgrimage, I had a picture in my head of how this mini-break would play out and I've conned myself into believing it will be realized no matter what, with a little nudge from Johnnie or Jack. Holidays are only as good as your imagination, or the power of whatever is your poison

of choice. I remember the last time I was truly, wonderfully happy on this island. It was on a mushroom jam trip with a friend and a few strangers, gathered on a table outside the now dearly departed Hey Jude!, the place to hang out in back in the day. A world began to sprout behind the person across me. A carnival. Ferris wheel bulbs circling round and carousels, blue lights and yellows and reds, and then fireworks, but all without a sound.

I feel like I'm in the midst of that circus now, albeit I'm sober (my high had dissipated and it's impossible to get a drink from the bar). The same blue and red and yellow lights surround me. Me and three thousand people probably, pumping their hands into the air, surrendering all to this music like El Shaddai devotees, shaking their heads with eyes closed as if they can't believe they're having the best time of their lives. That or they just had a really bad burrito. It's hard not to make the same motions, especially since Joseph the photographer has started to shake his head as well, singing along. And it's raining, too, as if the heavens have decided to give everyone a license to make more of this revelry in their heads than what it actually is. Laboracay is Manila transported to a resort island, simply put. A phenomenon founded on a hashtag and built on a mosaic of Instagram posts. But there's no point wallowing in that disposition. Not when you're in the middle of a thousand people desperately trying to make this holiday, this weekend, this evening, count.

Because its real here, now. Helped on by showers of confetti. A strong ball of air is shot from the stage like a cannonball, and quite literally blows everyone away. An EDM-ized "Sweet Dreams" by the Eurythmics starts booming from the speakers beside me. The crowd cheers. Skin slithers against wet skin. Everything is magnificent and I raise my arms and bang the heavens and imagine how off-the-charts

next year's party is going to be. In my head, I'm thinking I won't be carried back to bed by this crowd, unfortunately, but the next day, I will set sail on a white speedboat and I will imagine I'm surrounded by naked cabana boys feeding me beluga caviar and truffled eggs from oyster shells. Fantasy, somebody said, is a place where it rains. And this weekend, on this island, the rain won't let up.

BULLES CONTROL OF CONT

THE CALL COMES AT 2:23, AS I'M ENJOYING A POSTPRANDIAL SNOOZE IN MY FIFTH-FLOOR **ROOM AT THE NOBU HOTEL. MY WINDOW OVERLOOKS THE CENTRAL COURTYARD THAT** THE NOBU SHARES WITH THE TWO OTHER HOTELS IN THE CITY OF DREAMS COMPLEX, THE HYATT AND THE CROWN TOWERS. FAR-THER ON LIES THE COBALT BLUE OF MANILA **BAY BENEATH THE INFINITE AND PERIWINKLE BLUE OF THE LATE SUMMER SKY. IN OTHER** WORDS, IT'S A GREAT DAY FOR A WALK IN THE COURTYARD OR EVEN OUT ON THE BAYFRONT.

> But I'm not going to get any sunshine on my balding head for the rest of the day, thanks to this call. "Your table's ready," says the lady on the line, and she doesn't mean a table at one of COD's many restaurants. She means my table at the PokerStars corner of the casino, for which I've reserved a seat as soon as it opens. It's what I'm here for, aside from treating my wife Beng to a staycation at the Nobu. Armed with a modest bankroll (generously arranged by Esquire), I've come to see what gambling in one of the Philippines' poshest new resort complexes is like.

> Opening just last December, City of Dreams is a billiondollar project operated by Melco Crown, one of Asia's premier resort and casino groups. It's one of a cluster of new enterprises encouraged by the government in a bid to establish the Philippines as one of the region's new gaming and entertainment capitals.

> I'm here to gamble, but didn't come all this way across the city just to look at a parade of cards. COD has a whole lot more than games of chance, and one way you can't lose is to book a room in one of the three hotels onsite and sample the global cuisine on offer: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, American, French, and, of course, Filipino. It's the first thing I do after checking in, while the poker tables are still closed: reconnoiter the place and have a hearty good lunch.

> I've chosen well in opting to stay at the Japanesethemed Nobu, the serenity of which soothes me before the impending storm. Moreover, a door in the lobby segues right into the casino, and immediately my senses respond to a swarm of familiar sensations I've encountered in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, Singapore, and Macau: the swirls and spirals of multicolored lights, the carnival melodies played by hundreds of slot machines, the ching-ching and the chakchak-chak of a gay assortment of games all designed to tease and tantalize the imagination. "Feeling lucky today?" whispers a jolly Buddha promising a multimillion-peso payout.

I steer clear of the siren slots, and watch as a granny

in a wheelchair-one of many PWDs I notice in the neighborhood—whiles her minutes away at the roulette table, plastering the felt with many-colored chips, covering nearly every number and option-all except the winning one, the 35. Lola nonchalantly dips into her purse for a couple of P1,000 bills and does the same thing all over again.

Baccarat seems to be the game of choice for most card players. It should be in any respectable gambler's repertoire, but it's something-like literary theory and all that postmodern crap—that I've never been able to wrap my head around. Which is probably just as well, because from what I hear across the felt, baccarat is a certified bankroll-burner.

It was blackjack that got my blood boiling in my misspent youth, but having switched to poker since, I can't stand the thought of losing even the minimum bet of P300 in one hand, even if I've pretty much memorized the theoretical table of hit-or-stay combinations. For today, I'll stick with poker, where you don't play against the house but against your fellow punters, and you can cut your losses with some common sense and uncommon discipline.

I remind myself that there's this wonderful option in poker called the "fold"—never used as often as it should be—which means that you can actually drop out and not play a hand. As Kenny Rogers warbles in The Gambler, "You gotta know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em," which is what most gamblers, myself included, blithely forget or ignore.

Now truly hungry, I pick out a Chinese noodle place called Noodl8 (yes, with the lucky number 8) right on the casino floor. The prices are surprisingly reasonable, and the food even better-you can design your own noodle dish, ticking the ingredients off a master list.

Like the other new tourist-oriented casinos in town, COD has apparently secured an exemption from the no-smoking ordinance—what's a gambler, after all, without his tobacco and alcohol-but it's good to know that senior-citizen discounts still apply here, so we're not entirely on foreign territory.

After lunch, I go back up, and drift off in my chair; Beng's not checking in till after dinner, knowing she won't be seeing much of my shadow today. And then my phone rings, summoning me to the poker game. I'm on.

One of my favorite quotes comes from British novelist and short story master W. Somerset Maugham, who once said that the "grandest extravagance is to have that which you most desire, and then to throw it away."



I CURSE UNDER MY BREATH BUT SHOW NOTHING MORE THAN A WRY SMILE. POKER'S A GREAT EXERCISE IN DEALING WITH EMOTIONS.

I'm off to battle with ample ammunition, but I don't feel like indulging Maugham—not just yet.

The casino's second-floor poker area is roomy and plush, and I'm joined at my 25-50 table by a couple of fellow Pinoys, a Chinoy in a business suit, a Korean, and two Jews speaking Hebrew (peppered with just enough Tagalog to let you know not to say anything foolish in their company). "25-50" means that the minimum bet on the table is, effectively, P50, and that doesn't sound like much, but things can escalate very quickly in poker from the low hundreds to the thousands, depending on egos and bankrolls. Thousandpeso pots are fairly common in 25-50.

An automatic card shuffler speeds up the action considerably; normally, a dealer has to shuffle the deck three times and cut it twice before dealing. That's all done by some genie under the table who also lifts up the fresh deck and ingests the old one after every hand with the push of a green button.

I open on a classic nosedive. I call with my first hand, the promising Ace-3 of spades, but it gets shot down immediately with a hard bet from the Chinoy. I end up throwing away my first good hand, a pocket or hidden pair of Queens, on a courtesy "chop"—by unwritten rule, you don't play the hand when only two of you are left. The next time I get another pair of Queens, I go all in—and am instantly called by both players on my left and right; a King shows up, and both villains turn over Ace-King. Within an hour, with luck like this, I'm down 4K.

I also have to get used to the new chip colors; every casino has its own color scheme. I get a reasonably

good hand like King-Queen suited, and decide to raise the basic P50 bet to something like P250, and toss three chips onto the felt, and the other players' eyes pop—what, a P1,200 raise on a very "dry" and unexciting flop? Everyone folds, of course. I realize that I've just mistaken a P1,000 chip for a P50 one, and I'm lucky no one has "limped in" or is tucking away a pocket pair of Aces.

I need a little beer to calm the nerves. The San Mig Light is free, as is the coffee, juice, and tea; there's also a tubful of bottled water available to any player. Our table has grown. We're joined by an American, and also by a bearded Pinoy nicknamed "Baby Ruth", and by a young and attractive biracial couple, obviously regulars in the place, whom everyone calls "Mr. and Mrs. Smith."

Three hours into the game, I'm out of the hole and even up by a couple of thousand, playing cautious poker, tournament-style. I'm so careful, channeling Kenny Rogers, that I fold pocket Jacks. Once, I get another Ace-3 and fold, only to have Ace-3-3 appear on the table. I curse under my breath but show nothing more than a wry smile. Poker's a great exercise in suppressing emotion, and the training's served me well in other circumstances, like dealing with difficult clients.

I'm feeling good, then I step out briefly to say hi to Beng, who's just arrived. "Why is it so loud in there?" Beng wonders as she passes the lobby, adding, "How can you think with all that music in the background?" The entertainment is non-stop, with live bands and singers performing on both floors. I have to explain that "That's the whole point, my dear, casinos will have all these distractions so you feel like you're having fun even when you're losing money." I also explain why



casinos don't have any clocks; Beng's a sweetie and indulges me this one vice, but she can't bet 10 pesos on a pair of Aces if her life depended on it.

To be fair, the singer on our floor, an Ed Sheeran soundalike, is really, really good; I have to turn and look behind me to make sure he's not lip-syncing. I could do worse than leave the table and knock off a cold beer on a sofa and just listen to the music, but relaxation entails an opportunity cost, and I get back into the game.

And then things go downhill very quickly, in a big long blur that stretches deep into the night. I'm fighting all the way, trying to stay calm, but I keep getting blindsided by higher sets, higher straights. I've been here before, and as annoying as losing gets, I know I'm a gambler because I get an adrenaline rush even in abject defeat, and I can't walk away. By 11 p.m. I'm in the hole by nearly 15K. My bankroll's close to the limit, and I don't want to go there, i.e., to make another trip to the ATM.

Mondays are supposed to be slow days at COD but by midnight the place is packed, and tempers begin to fray in the gathering din. There's an argument at our table over texting while playing a hand. The guy to my right-let's call him Mr. R-rather brazenly suggests that Mr. and Mrs. Smith could be cheating by texting their hands to each other. I think it's a silly accusation, and I'm glad the situation doesn't get beyond simmering, but stranger things have happened in casinos, which is why the COD's ceiling is dotted with little black half-domes—overhead security cameras that can zoom in on the tiniest action at every table.

I decide that it's a good time to take another break, and I saunter downstairs, suddenly feeling hungry

again. I find a cart selling jumbo hotdogs, and it turns out to be another of the place's best-kept secrets, fat and juicy, cradled in a huge bun.

A few minutes later, back upstairs, my luck begins to turn, although I'm still chimneys of chips away from recovering my stack. I'm close to playing 12 hours, but I feel energized by the hotdog and by a tingling suspicion that, as they say in West Side Story, "Something's coming, something good!"

Finally I find myself holding another Ace-3, both clubs. I call the bet, and two clubs turn up on the "flop," or the first three open cards. There's a flurry of betting-a "Broadway" or a 10-to-Ace straight seems to be shaping up-but all I can see are those two clubs; I need another one to win. At the "turn," or the fourth card, someone makes a good hand and the bets go up again. I call. The dealer flips the last or "river" card over, and miracle of miracles, it's the Jack of clubs. I go all in. Mr. R calls and turns up a Queen-high flush. I turn over my Ace-3-the absolute nuts, in pokerese. I've won, and when I rack up my chips, I've gotten everything back, plus a bit more.

I'm not a churchgoer, but I take this as a sign from Divine Providence to cash out pronto and join Beng in bed. I can't believe how neatly this story ends, this fairytale finish to a grueling slog-it won't pass muster in my fiction classbut I'm in the City of Dreams, so I suppose I just have to take things for what they are, and not complain too much about the incredibility of happy endings. [2]

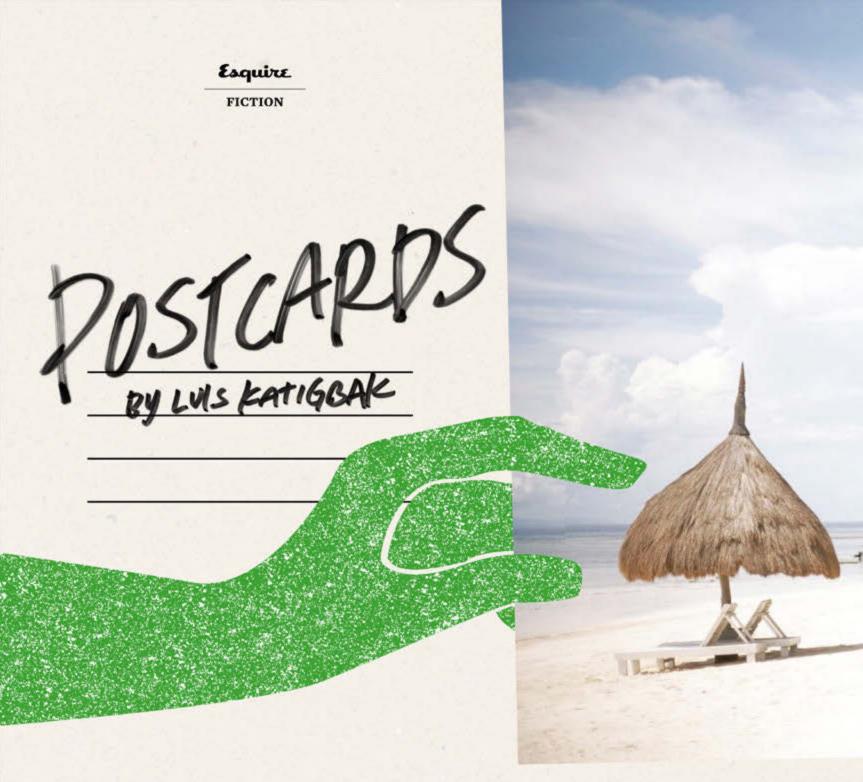
MONDAY'S ARE BUT BY MIDNIGHT THE PLACE IS PACKED, AND **GATHERING DIN.**

BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO THE PHILIPPINES | INTERVIEWED BY ERWIN ROMULO | PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOSEPH PASCUAL

- ▶ I grew up in London, spent four years of my life there and then moved all over the world: Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Iran. What it meant for me was that from day one I spoke two languages, and [the knowledge] that there was a bigger world out there.
- > My dad was initially a radioman for the BBC, and then for a radio in Pakistan. From there he started the Ministry of Commerce in Pakistan in the '60s. Then in '71 he switched from Pakistan to Bangladesh when it split. So I had this interesting life where parts of the time I lived with them and I went to International Schools, other times I was parked with relatives.
- > We thought nothing of packing our bags in Karachi, and off we were living in Iran for three years, in Japan for two years, and in China during the Cultural Revolution.
- > China during the Cultural Revolution was amazing. I was first in Beijing in 1971 and there was no international airport. The only hotel that foreigners were allowed to stay in was called the French Hotel. The Terracota warriors had not yet been discovered. The only big hotel in Shanghai was the Peace Hotel on The Bund. It was a completely different world. But it was very apparent to everybody [that we should] as my father used to say, "watch this country."
- > The biggest lesson I learned from both my father and my mother was a sense of humility, because we lived a really privileged life.
- > We were allowed to go play with the Shah's kids. I saw Mao Zedong in the flesh, I saw presidents. If you're brought up like that, you think you live in the upper stratosphere where streets are clear wherever you go. But throughout that period, they made sure we went to Bangladesh, had a look at how poor people lived. We had this ability to converse with everybody, no matter who they were.
- > I worked in a restaurant with zero experience. I worked in a huge pie factory. I worked in hotels. It was real character-forming experience, because you really realize the dignity of work. You pull the hard hours in the summer or late at night, and the rewards for these types of jobs are barely survival wages.

- > At 17 I had to go back to London and I lived as a penniless refugee. My only care in the world then was who I was going to take out to prom, and the pseudo-revolution with what was going on with The Beatles and the Vietnam war, you know, a completely different mind-set from there to get into a situation where we didn't know what was going to happen from one day to the next.
- > The strangest thing about being in Manila is I think that people can literally live lives here that are completely cut off from the reality of the country. You can live in a bubble, and be completely unaffected and you probably don't care about it either. This isn't some sort of latent Marxist saying, what I'm saying is that provided that [it] doesn't make you completely detached from reality, or uncaring, or you have no social conscience, that's where the fault lines are. And it is possible here—to grow up thinking there's nothing wrong with the world.
- > The beauty of my job now is I still get to see the extremes. At one extreme I see the Lucio Tans of this world, and the other extreme are the victims of Yolanda or Tondo, sweeping a living off Smokey Mountain.
- > With my bit of Tagalog, I now know seven languages.
- ➤ **To be a great diplomat,** I think first you have to be very clear about your intent. And I'm always very clear.
- > I'm here to serve British foreign policy and national interest. If we get it right, it also benefits the Philippines. Sometimes what happens is the ambassadors fall in love with the country that they are in, and they become an advocate of that country.
- > I was a Beatles fan from when we heard them sing. And my favorite uncle gave me my first LP when I was 11 years old, in 1967.
- ➤ If Ringo Starr would be tempted to come back to the Philippines, he would find that this is one of the most infectious places for a performance. I would show him, as a musician, what a big role music plays in life here, from singing in church to karaoke, to world class performers...music here is as much a big part of living breathing and eating. Not every country in the world has that.







NNA RARELY RECEIVED POSTCARDS, mostly because the kind of friends she had were the kind who didn't travel much. If any of them ever did go out of town, she would probably get a short letter or nothing at all, depending on the duration of the friend's trip. So the mail that morning was a bit of a surprise.

It arrived while she was studying for a mathematics test. The electric buzz of the doorbell snapped her out of a daydream of conic sections, and she padded out to check the contents of the mailbox. Bills, bills, a letter for her mother, and... a postcard for her.

She turned the postcard over and over, first glancing at the picture, then checking to see if the name on it was indeed hers (Ms. Anna Vacare: it was), and then going back to the picture. The postcard depicted a wild fiesta, a riot of vivid color and whirling celebrants. Laughing masks and rainbow garb. Confetti and sunlight. Her forehead wrinkled in a frown as she noticed that the card did not indicate where the scene was taken. The postmark was smudged and indeci-

pherable; no help there. She had never bothered to learn much about Philippine traditions or celebrations. It might have been some fiesta in Palawan. Or Batangas. Or wherever. It might have been a picture of some South American jamboree for all she knew.

The message was brief, typewritten, and a time-worn cliché besides: "Having a nice time. Wish you were here."

DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS Anna received postcards from various nameless and exciting places. A city of spires and temples and mysterious people in dark trench coats; a small town where jugglers and mimes and fire-breathers wandered the streets; a land of untamed flora where exotic multi-horned beasts roamed. She did not recognize any of these locales. None of her friends could identify them either. And always the same message: Having a nice time...

Did she have a globetrotting secret admirer? The idea brought a brief smile to her lips, but it did not feel true, somehow.

Ryan was no help at all. He dismissed the cards as the work of "Some idiot with nothing better to do," and predicted that they would stop



arriving in a few weeks' time. "Like crank calls," he said. "Ignore them, they go away."

The last time they talked about it was in a fast-food restaurant, after a movie. Ryan was consuming his burger in steady, rapid munches. Anna was thinking aloud.

"You know, it's really strange," she said. "I've been looking through encyclopedias, advertisements and old issues of National Geographic, and I can't find any of those places."

Ryan shrugged, and continued to munch munch munch.

Anna reached for a french fry. "The thing is," she continued, "I've been reading a lot of things lately, about quantum physics and parallel dimensions..." A pause. She knew Ryan well enough to predict that his reaction to her next statement would not be an encouraging one. "I don't think those places exist in this world."

He managed an amused snort. "You've been getting postcards from Mars?"

She shook her head, and wished he would choke on his burger. "Never mind."

"That's the last time I take you to a sci-fi movie," he declared. "You know, for a Math major you've got some imagination."

She stared at his large nose and wondered what she ever saw in him. I must have been pretty damn bored to settle for this, she thought. Maybe if she stared at his nose long enough it would explode.

They sat there for a while, staring at opposite walls in silence. Ryan started humming a song he didn't know the words to.

NE NIGHT, Anna made the first of two important discoveries regarding the postcards. She had been staring at the cards (seven of them so far), and arranging them every which way: shifting them around on her desk, stacking them on top of each other, constructing little fragile houses with them. Finally, she sighed and spun them in the air, Frisbee-fashion. They came down with a cardboard clatter and she picked them up one by one.

For weeks she had been toying with scenarios. The postcards had been a delight at first, but now the maddening absence of an ex-

planation was getting to her. She opened a cabinet, and rummaged around a bit until her hand emerged triumphant: a gleaming pair of scissors in its grasp.

She picked up the nearest postcard and cut it into neat horizontal strips.

Immediately afterwards she regretted doing so. It had been one of her favorite scenes: a town of laughing people, where the houses had been painted like toys: all bright primary colors. A blind musician with a toothless grin and a guitar. Vendors selling steaming food.

She sighed, and threw herself on her bed. Tried to sleep. Tossed and turned. Muttered. And then remembered an article she had been reading.

It had been about flexagons, paper polygons folded from straight or crooked strips of paper which, she recalled, have the property of changing their faces when they are "flexed." She thought a moment. If she remembered the procedure from Roger F. Wheeler's article correctly, it wouldn't be too hard for her to construct something interesting out of the unfortunate cardboard strips.

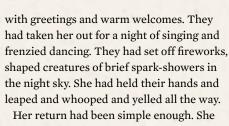
She taped the strips together and marked off a series of ten equilateral triangles on them. She folded the resulting strip backwards along the edge of the third triangle, and turned it over. Another fold, a turn, a fold, a dab of white school glue: and she had a workable trihexaflexagon. A hexagonal mathematical plaything with three different faces that could be brought into view.

Anna sat down and started flexing the thing idly, pinching two of its adjacent triangles together and pushing the opposite corner of the hexagon towards the center. She did this over and over, in a state of mild fascination. She did not notice when the edge of her loose T-shirt got caught in one of the folds.

Flex, flex, flex. With each successive flex, more of her shirt disappeared into the flexagon. By the seventh flex, Anna had vanished entirely.

HE REAPPEARED seemingly out of nowhere a few seconds later, laughing like anything. She had a red bandanna with wild patterns tied around her neck, and a straw hat perched on her head. In her right hand she held a tote bag that contained various souvenirs: a book of handwritten poetry, a small wooden sculpture of a clown, a bottle of something sweet and intoxicating. In her left hand she held another, slightly crumpled flexagon.

She stretched herself out on the bed, waited until she stopped chuckling to herself. Relaxed. What a day, she thought. What a day what a day what a day!



had drawn a detailed picture of her room: its walls, furnishings and eternal clutter. Then she had cut the picture into strips...

The people had given her gifts and urged her to return.

She hugged her pillow and wiggled with delight at the thought of her future secret travels.

IT WAS DURING one of these remarkable vacations that Anna made the second discovery. She was in an unmapped tropical country, enjoying the sights and sounds of a wild fiesta that only took place once a decade. The laughing masks and rainbow garb.

Confetti and sunlight.

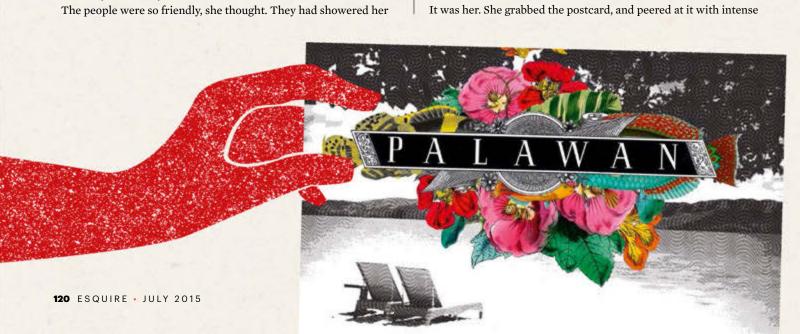
She wandered over to a large marked-off area where numerous stalls were set up. They were selling clothes, perfumes, electronic gadgets, miracle cures, magic rings. People were surging this way and that, shouting to each other, laughing. The whole place throbbed with heat and life.

She came across a stall with a banner that said: Postcards from Everywhere.

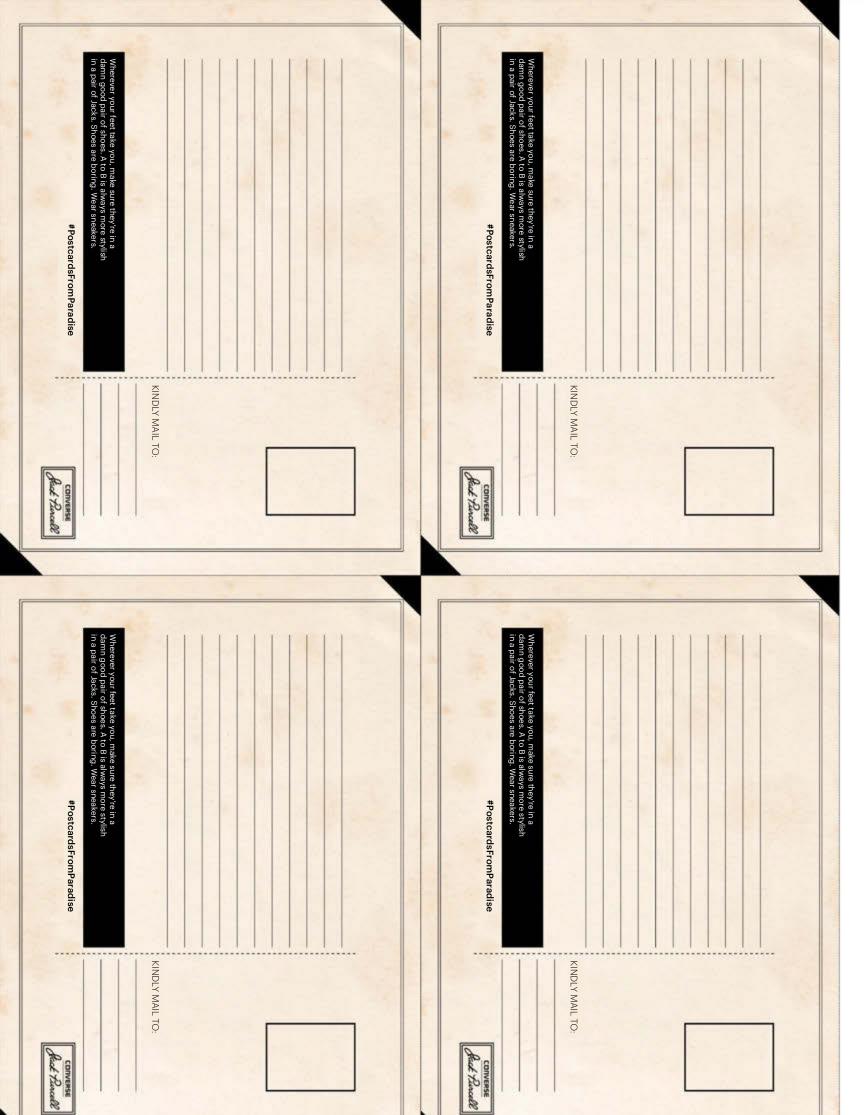
There were metal rotating racks inside the stall, laden with snapshots of exotic locales. They depicted streets of burning neon light, vast sprawling countrysides of green and gold, levitating cities, underwater kingdoms, dark jungles. Anna stood beside the rack and turned it slowly, letting her gaze travel from the top row to the bottom, and back up again, allowing each scene to sink in. Some of these places she recognized from her travels, some of them she had seen in mundane magazines at home, some of them were completely unfamiliar.

And then she gasped. She bent down to peer closely at one of the postcards. She had to look twice, thrice, before she could reassure herself that she was not mistaken.

The picture was of a street scene in an unfamiliar city. The buildings were giant steel cylinders with circular windows. Some of the people were wearing tall conical hats. And there, on the street corner, buying what looked like a luminous tennis ball, was a woman with long, frizzy hair, who wore a brightly colored scarf and a face that Anna recognized as the one she saw in the bathroom mirror every morning.







fascination. The woman looked slightly older, but the eyes, the nose, the mouth, everything... It was definitely her.

She turned to the shopkeeper and asked, "How much for this one?"

HEN ANNA GOT HOME, she lay on her bed and tried to figure it all out. Possibility one: she had a twin somewhere, whom hardship or environment had aged faster. Possibility two: the picture would be taken some time in the future, during one of her off-world ventures. It had somehow made its way back in time, to that postcard rack. Maybe the shop should have been called "Postcards from Every Time and Place," instead.

Of course, there was always the rational possibility that it was not her in the picture at all, nor anyone even remotely connected to her. Maybe it was just someone who bore a slight resemblance. Somehow this third option was the least acceptable. She picked up the postcard for the nth time and stared at it. That's me, she thought. Even though she occupied only a small corner of the picture, even though her breeze-tossed hair obscured part of her face, she was somehow certain.

So she did what she had known she was going to do all along: she cut up the postcard into neat horizontal strips.

AS SOON AS ANNA folded herself through the geometric portal, she sensed that something was amiss. Instead of materializing in that unfamiliar city, she was in a place of almost total darkness. Darkness above, below, all around her. At least the darkness below her seemed



solid enough; she could stamp her foot and feel its sturdiness. But she couldn't see anything around her; she could not even determine if she was indoors or outside.

Anna reasoned that there must have been a light source somewhere, for she could see herself. She could hold her hand up in front of her face, watch her fingers as she curled and stretched them. But the light did not seem to be coming from a specific point; in fact, it seemed to be coming from her.

Suddenly, someone spoke. "Well, I should have known you would get us into trouble sooner or later." The tone was affectionate, without a trace of reprimand. Anna turned around, and there, where there had been black nothingness mere moments before, was the woman she had seen in the picture, shedding her own luminance.

It was like looking at a mirror, or into a calm still pool, except that the image before her possessed three dimensions, it was not mimicking her movements, and it looked just a few years more mature.

"Hi," Anna said.

"Hi yourself," the older Anna replied, with a smile.

"This is going to sound like a silly question," Anna said, "But who are you? And where the heck are we?"

"I think you already know who I am, Anna," Anna replied. "I'm you. You're me. Of course, having said that, I'm still me and you're still you. And as for where—well, we can't be in the same place at the same time. I guess the universe wouldn't allow that. So we're in a kind of no-place. A limbo, a neverland."

"Excuse me?"

"I'm the Anna of another existence. Folding yourself through the flexagon would have brought you into my world. Apparently you're not supposed to do that, at least not while I'm there. So here we are."

Anna frowned. Then something occurred to her.

"Were you the one who sent me all those weird postcards?"

"You catch on fast! I guess genius runs in the family," Anna laughed. "Well, um—I just want to say, thanks."

"You're welcome. I did it for selfish reasons, though. I was bored." "Explain, please," Anna said.

"Well, assume a myriad of parallel existences. Now, the Anna Vacare of one existence, let's call her Anna 1, wants to travel between worlds, and the only way she can do that is by displacing another Anna. So every time this second Anna 'traveled', it would facilitate an interdimensional 'shuffling' of Annas, allowing Anna 1 to go—elsewhere."

Anna's head jittered with question marks. There was so much the explanation had left unexplained—but now she noticed that her older self seemed to be flickering, like the picture on a defective television.

"Uh-oh, I guess the party's over," the older Anna said. "If my guess is right, any moment now we're going to be sent back to our respective worlds. So if there's anything else you want to ask your doppelganger, ask away."

"Okay..." Strangely, instead of asking her older self about the nuts and bolts of off-world travel—such questions suddenly seemed trivial—Anna found that she was voicing questions that she had asked of herself on more than one occasion. "Haven't you ever worried about getting lost...? About not being able to return? Or even about someday not being able to travel from world to world any more, and spending the rest of your days knowing exactly what you're missing?"

"I have. Those are all valid concerns. Still and all..." The other Anna paused, for a moment lost in thought. "I think the risk is well worth it. You know?"

Anna remembered the taste of wild fruit on an unknown shore. Listening to strange music in an unearthly concert hall. Riding a long-necked, multicolored beast across a field of pleasant green. Impossible things, a year ago. And now?

"I think I know what you mean," she said good-naturedly, as the other's image rippled and blurred before her. Anna waved at Anna, as they both faded home.

iew from the top PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTU NEPOMUCENO STYLING BY CLIFFORD OLANDAY ART DIRECTION BY EDRIC DELA ROSA ESQUIRE JULY 2015

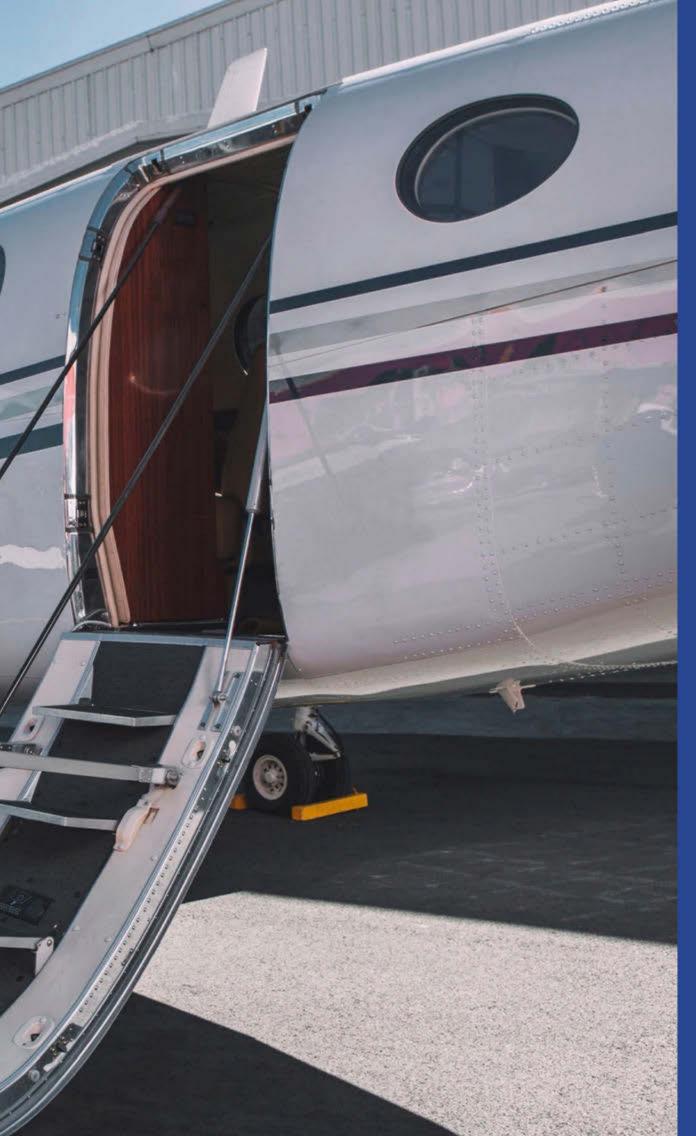


What do you wear en route to your destination?
How do you go from business to casual lunch to fancy dinner (and back again) on a limited wardrobe? From suits to sport coats to pullovers, Travel Time host Manu Sandejas shows you how to roam the world in style.









Sport coat and shirt, both by Hermès, Greenbelt 3, Makati City. Pants (P32,000) by Ermenegildo Zegna, Rustan's Makati. Pocket square (P4,500) by Drake's at Signet, Makati City. Sunglasses by Ray-ban at Eye Society, Jupiter Street, Makati City.

First page: Jacket (P21,500) by Reiss, Rustan's Makati. Sweater (P8,250) and pants (P8,950), both by Polo Ralph Lauren, Rustan's Makati. Shirt (P4,950) by Brooks Brothers, Rustan's Makati. Bag by Salvatore Ferragamo, Greenbelt 4, Makati City. Sunglasses by Ray-ban at Eye Society, Jupiter Street, Makati City.





Jacket (P186,500), sweater (P31,000), and jeans (P18,500), all by Black Label by Ralph Lauren, Greenbelt 3, Makati City. Shoes by Salvatore Ferragamo, Greenbelt 4, Makati City. Sunglasses by Ray-ban at Eye Society, Jupiter Street, Makati City.

Opposite: **Trench coat** (P20,500), **shirt** (P4,950), and **pants** (P7,950), all by Reiss, Rustan's Makati. **Belt** (P4,650) by Polo Ralph Lauren, Rustan's Makati. **Bag** (P284,500) by Bottega Veneta, Greenbelt 4, Makati City. **Sunglasses** by Ray-ban at Eye Society, Jupiter Street, Makati City.





Journeyman

"Me? I'm a tourist like anybody else," says travel host Manu Sandejas. "I'm discovering these places and I'm learning."

When he took over hosting duties of *Travel Time* early this year, Manu admits there was a bit of fear. The show, which has been on the air since 1986—making it the longest running travel program in the country—is an institution, and its former host, Susan Calo Medina (who passed away last January) was an even bigger icon. The expectations were pretty high. So, no, Manu didn't want to mess it up. He had no interest in drastically changing the show's format. Nor was he interested in imitating Susan, whose sonorous voice and regal bearing made her an inimitable presence.

The new host looked to the biggest lesson he learned from his predecessor: "to be hungry, to learn about our people, and to share this knowledge." In the dozen episodes he has done on his own, Manu has approached everything with an insatiable curiosity.

He talks about "a beautiful piece of property in the mountains" of the Cordilleras, the Winaca Eco-Cultural Village in Tublay, Benguet. He finds scuba diving with marine archaeologists in Marinduque "a fascinating experience," remarking how the shipwreck they studied was just a part of the bigger picture in the province's maritime history. And he laments how local weaving is becoming a dying art. "It's a generation-to-generation thing," he shares. "They picked up [weaving] from their mothers, but who's going take over after them?"

As Manu learns about places and customs, his faith in the locals who hold fast to the traditions of the past and the innovations of the present remain, too. "I hope I'm doing it properly," he reflects. "I hope I do justice to the place, the people, the culture, the traditions. I hope that I'm able to present it clearly to everyone so that they will appreciate it as well as I do."

Travel Time airs on ANC every Saturday at 9:30 a.m., Sunday at 11 p.m., and Monday at 4 a.m.



Suit (P35,500) and shirt (P4,750), both by Brooks Brothers, Rustan's Makati. Necktie (P7,500) by Drake's at Signet, Makati City. Bag by Salvatore Ferragamo, Greenbelt 4, Makati City.







Take Me Away

Whoever said that the journey is more important than the destination must have been flying via private aircraft. Imagine: you are onboard an AirBus helicopter, cruising at 127 knots toward the crater of Mt. Pinatubo. Travel is nothing but joy in a cabin configured for exceptional comfort (leather seats, Bose noise-cancellation headsets, iPad, WiFi) and more (Outdoor GoPro, Spidertracks GPS Tracking System) and more importantly a well-maintained flying machine that assures your safety. Before you know it, you come upon a crazy view of the volcano. The crater's mouth opens up like a cup to reveal shining turquiose blue waters. Take a picture.

With its fleet of helicopters and jets, the PhilJets Group offers charter services for travelers looking for an exceptional way to fly. The service is available for corporate or VIP transport (clients include City of Dreams Manila, Solaire Resort and Casino, The Peninsula Manila), special occasions, photography and filming, aerial survey, or just a very different way to experience several Philippine hotspots.

An aerial tour of the Banaue Rice Terraces, Taal Volcano, or Corregidor Island is now available to you with one simple phone call. Aside from swooping over terrains and waterways, there are options for, say, lunch at Antonio's in Tagaytay for your Taal trip or an overnight stay at Banaue Hotel. And because you're skipping the roads and highways and their attendant headaches, your journey clocks in at record time, from an hour for nearby destinations like Taal to less than four hours for Banaue. For the ultimate head start to the weekend, there is the 30-minute ride to Punta Fuego. The helicopter flies above its sparkling cove before landing on a private helipad.

Now that you can't imagine traveling any other way, the company, which has been servicing buyers of jets and helicopters for more than 15 years, can acquire your very own luxury aircraft on your behalf. Trust us—or the over 1,000 passengers that have flown via PhilJets—there is no better way to travel.

AAOP Hangar 2, Domestic Airport Road, Pasay City. +632 851 0639. philjets.com.

> Jacket (P61,500) by Purple Label by Ralph Lauren and jeans (P18,500) by Black Label by Ralph Lauren, Greenbelt 3, Makati City. Sweater (P41,000) by Ermenegildo Zegna, Rustan's Makati. Sunglasses by Ray-ban at Eye Society, Jupiter Street, Makati City.



OCTOBER 1971

BY LUIS KATIGBAK

"Welcome back to the 40's: the last time America was happy." Nostalgia has become a bad word of late, shedding much of its romantic frisson and taking on implications of dangerous levels of selfdelusion. The good times were never that good, or at least never equally for everybody, and to rose-color (or whitewash) a previous decade or regime or era does everyone a disservice in the end.

And yet it is hard to deny or completely condemn the lure of fondly-filtered memory, which pulls at even the most toughminded of graphic designers. While George Lois openly resisted what he called "girlie" covers during his legendary run of Esquire covers, when the '40s theme rolled along, he was only too eager to "put a swinging George Petty pinup on a swing-out cover."

"When I was a youngster," Lois recounts, "Petty's lush American Dream Girls were right up there with Botticelli's Venus, Rubens' flesh goddesses, Manet's picnicking nude, Lachaise's she-women, and the immortal Bettie Page, with more curves than even God envisioned. Just putting my name next to that of

the great George Petty gave me a thrill."

We pick and choose what to magnify or focus on in our past, and that act says a lot about who we are. Memories of happy yesterdays may very well be an illusion, or at least an exaggeration, but perhaps at their best they serve as ammunition against a dreaded present and an uncertain future, against the inevitable and unknowable march of days beyond our control.

MEGAWORLD

Most Awarded Company in the 2015 Property & Real Estate Awards

Megaworld, the Philippines' leader and pioneer developer of integrated urban townships and the top BPO office landlord and developer, emerged to be this year's most awarded company in the 2015 Property & Real Estate Awards held last Friday night at the new Marriott Grand Balfroom in Newport City, Organized by the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI) Philippines chapter, the awards were given to property developers that established proven track records and remarkable performances in the country's real estate industry. The 2015 Property & Real Estate Awards is FIABCI's first in the Philippines and was attended by property and home developers, contractors, realtors, brokers from the Asia Pacific region as well as officials from the Philippine governm

PRIX D'EXCELLENCE

OVERALL OUTSTANDING DEVELOPER

Reinforcing its leadership as the country's leading property devel-oper today, Megaworld emerged to be this year's OVERALL OUT-STANDING DEVELOPER for pioneering and innovating the LIVE-WORK-PLAY lifestyle concept into its developments. Megaworld down't only construct buildings. It creates sustainable

communities where everything is within reach. This kind of "life-style development" in the Philippine property sector has served as a model of other mixed-use developments in the country. Megaworld's success is now a testament of world-clais Filipino ingenuity and ex-









OUTSTANDING DEVELOPER FOR TOWNSHIP EASTWOOD CITY

As the country's pioneer and leader in the development of the so-called "integrated urban town-hips," Magainorid has gone a long way in changing the bandscape of property development in the

The country's first wholly-owned integrated urban township, Entwood City, which was also recognized by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) as the country's first cyberpark, has now become a successful benchmark for mixed-use communities in the Philippines. Today, Fastwood City is proud to be borne to uround 70,000 BPO and office workers, 25,000 condominium residents and more than 500 commercial retail partners, making it a major center of business and lifestyle in Quezon City.

DR. ANDREW L. TAN Property Man of the Year



Megaworld chairman and CEO Dr. Andrew L. Tan was named "Property Man of the Year" for his outstanding contribution in the Philippine real estate industry. FIADCI recognised Dr. Tan's the Philippine real estate automy. FIABLE recognized Dr. Early vision in creating sustainable communities that allow Filipinos to live, work, play and learn — the concept that Megaworld pi-necered and introduced to the Philippines 26 years ago. Through his visionary leadership, Dr. Tan has turned Megaworld into a real estate giant and one of the most admired componies in the Philippines today.



OUTSTANDING DEVELOPER FOR OFFICE 8 CAMPUS PLACE

As the company's continuing commitment for environmental sustainability, the 8 Campus Place Building A in McKinley Hill has been recognized as the country's first LEED Gold-certified building for Business Process Outsourcing (BPOs) companies.

LFFD, which stands for Landership in Friergy and Environment Design, is a green building tamp program developed by the U.S. Green Building Council or USGBC.

Among the building's "green" features include reduced number of parking spaces to encounage the building occoupters to use public intemportation instead of private vehicles, accommodations for bicycle storage and shower facilities.

The building abou uses 45% less water than any other standard buildings by providing water efficient plumbing fixtures. The exterior lunducage was also designed to use non-potable water for irrigating plares and vegetation. The use of wide-glass architecture was carefully plaresed to infilmer statuted light into the building by installing double glazed gas-filled installed (Lov) glass to reflect the sun's heat away from the building to reduce the six conditioning need inside the building, and the construction materials used contained more than 30% recycled contents.

